

PSEUDO-DIONYSIUS AREOPAGITE

# THE DIVINE NAMES

and

# THE MYSTICAL

# THEOLOGY

Translated from the Greek  
with an Introductory Study

by

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To  
my  
Mother

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Milwaukee 1980

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## PREFACE

In this Preface I shall (I) provide an overview of the study contained in the Introduction, (II) offer a very brief summary of the problem of authorship for and history of the Corpus Dionysianum, and (III) discuss the character of and conventions for my translation of the *Divine Names* and *Mystical Theology*.

### I

From the outset it is important for me to note the following translations of certain key Greek terms. I have translated οὐσία as "being," τὸ ὅν as "that which is," or "a being," and τὰ ὄντα as "beings." I have translated ὤν (ὅν) as "be-ing" to express through a participle the dynamic character of that to which this word refers. I have also translated τὸ εἶναι as "*being*," I thus distinguish it from being and be-ing for it is ambiguous with respect to these. Also the adverb οὕτως (derived from οὐσία and always found in the compound ὑπερουσίως) has been translated as "manner of being" or, more literally, "beingly."

Further, as we proceed, the reader will discover the inadequacy of propositional language, for this language is properly directed towards beings. To break away from this language to a certain extent I shall at times replace the copula "is" with ":", even in the context of my discussion on evil. (For example, I shall write "the divinity: be-ing beyond every way of being." The reader *must not* understand this as "the divinity is something which is existing beyond every way of being." For, the divinity is not a being for Pseudo-Dionysius.) In general, what follows the ":" says what preceeds it.

This work, written originally as my dissertation, has been particularly influenced by Plato's *Parmenides* and Heidegger's *Identität und Differenz*. The former has greatly influenced my understanding of the relation between *being* and unity; the latter, the character of metaphysics and of attempts to overcome metaphysical thought. My own work is, however, by no means a Platonic or Heideggerian reading of Pseudo-Dionysius. Rather the writings I mentioned function as intellectual "pedal-points" for much of what follows.

I need also to note the relation between the Introduction and my translation. As is well known in this hermeneutical age, all translation and, indeed, every reading of a text involves and is carried out in an

interpretative framework. The vast majority of translations of and commentaries on the *Corpus Dionysianum* (excepting, eg., Meister Eckhart, Nicholas of Cusa, and (less clearly) Eriugena) have been carried out in the same interpretative framework. Moreover I believe that this traditional framework rests on a metaphysics which is significantly different from Pseudo-Dionysius' and which has been the source of systematic mistranslations and misinterpretations of his writings. As my translation of Pseudo-Dionysius differs considerably from many past translations I have provided, in the Introduction, the framework which supports and, of course, is supported by my translation.

My study in the Introduction comprises four sections. The first offers both a provisional articulation of the nature of theology and an examination of the divinity in terms of divine unity and difference. The second section deals with Pseudo-Dionysius' conception of the divine causality. In this section, I work out the author's metaphysics. Section Three focuses upon the problem of evil, for this is a decisive problem in understanding the workings of divine causality. Finally, the fourth section deals both with four texts which involve the denial of causality and with a final discussion of affirmative and negative theology.

The great theme which resounds through Pseudo-Dionysius' writings is that the divinity is all as cause of all; but itself: nothing (*οὐδέν*) or non be-ing (*μὴ ὄν*). I would expand this theme in this way—the divinity is all that is. Apart from all that is: nothing. (The) divinity: nothing. For Pseudo-Dionysius the unfolding of this theme is the task of theology; for him theology has a twofold structure or tradition—affirmative and negative. Affirmative theology embraces Trinitarian theology (the theology of Father, Son and Spirit), metaphysics, and symbolic theology (the interpretation of sensible symbols as they apply to what is divine). Affirmative theology celebrates the divinity as cause of all that is.

In this causation the divinity differentiates itself in the totality of beings which, in being caused, attain to a likeness of the divinity. In attaining to this likeness, beings are ("exist") as both the same as and different from the divinity. Affirmative theology comprehends the divinity in reference to beings; that is, it seeks a knowledge of the divinity which is revealed in the light of beings. Thus, in knowing both the divinity as cause of beings and beings as what are caused by the divinity, affirmative theology dwells within and brings to light the sameness and difference which prevail between beings and the divinity. Hence, affirmative theology does not consist simply of statements which affirm the sameness of the divinity and beings. Affirmative theology also affirms the difference between the divinity and beings. The affirmation of this difference is the function of negative theology within

affirmative theology. It functions to deny that the divinity is anything like beings, in order to express the preeminence and simplicity of the divine cause.

Before discussing the character of negative (mystical) theology, let me consider Pseudo-Dionysius' conception of divine causality and his treatment of the problem of evil. For Pseudo-Dionysius, the divine cause brings all beings into *being* by its being-producing goodness. This letting-be of all beings is the procession (*πρόοδος*) and reversion (*ἐπιστροφή*) of beings out of and about the divinity in which they share or participate and in which they subsist as pluralized unities. Apart from this procession and reversion: the divinity abides. In this abiding, (*μονή*) the divinity: absolved from multiplicity and beyond being (*ὑπερουσίως*). Abiding, the divinity: be-ing *ὑπερουσίως*, *ὑπερηνωμένως*, and *ὑπεροχίως*. These adverbs are traditionally translated, especially in the Latin Western tradition, as "superessentially" ("in a super-essential manner"), "superunitary," and "preeminently." These translations presume that the divinity is a being which is supremely unified and is in a manner which surpasses every other being. That is, the divinity is interpreted to be the being which is preeminently essential and preeminently unified. These translations rest on a metaphysics which takes the divinity to be the *being* of beings which is the first, highest, and most real being (*ens realissimum*) existing in itself (*per se* or *καθ' αὐτό*) apart from other beings. Yet these translations and the understanding of the divinity on which they are based are fundamentally misleading; for the divinity is not a being! The divinity: beyond every way of being (beyond-beingly = *ὑπερουσίως*), and beyond every way of unity (*ὑπερηνωμένως*). Further, since having (participation) engenders multiplicity; the divinity: beyond every way of having (*ὑπεροχίως*). The divinity: before having (*προέχον*) and beyond having (*ὑπέρεχον*). Thus abiding, the divinity: beyond-beingly be-ing. Absolved from all limitation and multiplicity, (the) abiding divinity: simply and unlimitedly be-ing (*ὡν ἀπλῶς καὶ ἀπεριορίστως*). Apart from and before all that comes after it, (the) abiding divinity: before be-ing (*πρόων*).

The differentiation of the (always)-abiding divine unity is the procession and reversion of beings into *being*. Yet this differentiation is the divine ecstasis or eros; in letting beings be, the divinity comes out of itself into beings. That is, the procession and reversion of beings: the procession and reversion of the divinity out of itself and about itself. In letting beings be, the divinity differentiates itself and is the differentiation of itself; the divine differentiation: the be-ing of beings and the be-ing which is divinity. That is, the divinity is not a simple and unlimited being which exists or subsists in itself and independently from, prior to, or apart from beings. The divinity is not be-ing itself

subsisting in itself (*ipsum esse per se subsistens*). The divinity (divine be-ing): the be-ing of beings. In be-ing beings, there emerges the differentiation of beyond-beingly, simply and unlimitedly be-ing in limited and unified ways of be-ing.

In be-ing beings, the divinity lets be a hierarchically ordered totality of beings. Since good and one say the same and since be-ing is one and good, then all that is, is good. Yet, if this is so, how are we to account for or describe the evil which we find in the world? For Pseudo-Dionysius, evil itself (αὐτό τὸ κακόν): wholly separated from the good and from unity. Hence, evil itself can in no way be. Evil itself: be-ing in no manner whatsoever (μηδαμῇ μηδαμῶς ὄν). Hence, the question "why is there evil at all?" is unanswerable since it is an improper question; it asks for a cause of evil, which would be evil itself, where there is none. Nevertheless, evil can and does befall beings. Evil is commonly regarded as an imperfection, yet for Pseudo-Dionysius, not every imperfection is evil. For the imperfection which is in beings and which is due to the nature of beings is not evil. (Thus, for example, material bodies as such are not evil.) Rather, evil lies in the failure of a being to exist according to its nature; evil denotes a contrariness to beings (παρὰ τὴν οὐσίαν). No being or way of *being* is evil in itself; evil arises in the incompatibility of certain ways of being with one another. Thus, evil does not mark a presence or absence of being but, as it were, a parasence (contrariness) to being.

Armed with this brief description of Pseudo-Dionysius' conception of divine causality and evil, let me turn to a discussion of negative (mystical) theology. The practice of negative (mystical) theology culminates in the unity of oneself with the divinity. For Pseudo-Dionysius, the practice of this theology requires that one deny affirmative theology and all that is manifested in the light of beings; the practice of negative (mystical) theology requires that one deny all reference to what is. Within the light of beings the divinity is manifested as one, Trinity, and cause. Within this light the divinity is expressed in terms of source or constitution (ὑπαρξίς), goodness (ἀγαθότης), before be-ing, and beyond-beingly be-ing as support and ultimate source of *being*. Again, the practice of negative (mystical) theology requires that one stand out of the light of beings, abandon all knowledge of beings, and plunge into a darkness of unknowing (ἀγνοσία), into a unity with (that) beyond all and absolved from all. Yet, for Pseudo-Dionysius, beyond all and absolved from all: nothing (οὐδέν)—beyond-source beyond-goodness (ἢ τῆς ὑπεραγαθότητος ὑπερύπαρξίς) and beyond be-ing beyond beingly before all (πρὸ πάντων ὑπερουσίως ὑπέρων).

To understand the radical character of negative (mystical) theology we must distinguish the function of negative theology within



affirmative theology and metaphysics, from that of negative (mystical) theology. Within metaphysics, negative theology expresses divine causal preeminence by denying that it is anything like what is. Nevertheless, although this serves to deny that the divinity is any intelligible or sensible being, the divinity is still rendered intelligible within this denial, for the denial expresses the divinity in reference to beings as the ultimate cause and source of beings. As we have seen, affirmative theology dwells within and expresses the sameness and difference prevailing between beings and the divinity. Although negative theology functions within affirmative theology to express the difference of beings from the divinity and the separation of the divinity from beings, it cannot deny all reference to beings and cannot absolve the divinity from all reference to beings. However, negative (mystical) theology requires the denial of all reference to beings and of every attempt at making the divinity intelligible to us. Thus it requires that we deny affirmative theology and the divine cause (and Trinity). Culminating in ecstatic unity with the divinity, negative (mystical) theology requires that one deny the sameness and difference which prevail between beings and the divinity. In this radical denial, affirmative theology and, more particularly, metaphysics, are not declared to be false. For unlike affirmative theology, which offers an explanation of and discourse about what is, negative (mystical) theology requires the abandonment and indifference towards every explanation and discourse. In the cessation of all discourse, this denial makes possible unity with—nothing: (the) non-same and non-other.

Again, the divinity is all that is. Apart from all that is: nothing. (The) divinity: nothing.

## II

The texts which are translated in this volume comprise about one half of the *Corpus Dionysianum*; the remaining works in this Corpus are the *Celestial Hierarchy*, the *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, and *Letters VI-X*. Although the entire Corpus has had a decisive effect on many thinkers in both the West and the East (Byzantium), it has been fraught with enigma and controversy. These enigmas have not only included difficulties with the teaching which is contained in the Corpus; they have also been concerned with the identity of the author. With the exception of the Middle Ages, when the writings were accepted as orthodox and the author was identified with Dionysius the Areopagite (who, according to Acts 17:37, was converted to Christianity by St. Paul), there has been constant debate concerning the

Christian orthodoxy of the writings and the identity of the author.<sup>1</sup>

If one accepts the Corpus as genuine then, of course, it must have been written during the First Century. However, linguistic and historical studies have shown that the genuineness of the Corpus is highly doubtful. Many writers today view the Corpus as having been written around 500 A.D.<sup>2</sup> However, dates of authorship range from 129 to about 544. Ronald Hathaway, following Roques, lists 22 different persons and dates which have been proposed as the authors and as dates of composition of the Corpus. Chief among these include a Christian follower of the Alexandrian and Cappadocian schools with Neoplatonic tendencies (300-500);<sup>3</sup> an authentic "Dionysius" with pseudo-epigraphic interpretations (300-400);<sup>4</sup> a Christian follower of Basil of Caesarea (379);<sup>5</sup> Peter the Iberian (c450);<sup>6</sup> Peter the Fuller (430?-490)<sup>7</sup>; a Christian critic of Proclus (c. 420-529);<sup>8</sup> a fifth century Syrian (400-500);<sup>9</sup> Severus of Antioch (470-538)<sup>10</sup> John of Scythopolis or a companion (c540); and Damascius Diadochus or one of his pupils (c544).<sup>11</sup>

If the problem of determining the author of the Corpus is highly difficult and perhaps insoluble, at least the history of the Corpus is not that obscure. We may distinguish three periods in the history of the Corpus. The first occupies the period from the first citations of the Corpus in the early sixth century to the Lateran Council of 645; during this period the Corpus makes its initial appearance into the litera-

<sup>1</sup> For a general history of the Corpus see R. Roques, "Denys l'Areopagite," in *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité ascétique, et mystique, doctrine et histoire*. (Paris, 1957), III, pp. 244-86, and J. Stiglmayr, "Dionysius the Pseudo-Areopagite," in the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, (New York, 1909), V, pp. 13-18. (His presentation of the history of the Corpus is the basis of the present remarks.) For a good survey of the question of authorship see R. Hathaway, *Hierarchy and the Definition of Order*, (The Hague, 1964). For histories of the translations of the Corpus see both the "Introduction" to Dionysiaca (Desclee de Brouwer, 1937) and K. Doherty, trans., "Peter Caramelle's Introduction to C. Pera's edition of the *Divine Names* of St. Thomas," *Thomist Reader I* (1956), pp. 72-93.

<sup>2</sup> The *terminus ante quem* would seem to be the early sixth century, for it is during this period that the first reliable citations of the Corpus appear in the literature.

<sup>3</sup> See W. Voelker, *Kontemplation und Ekstase bei Pseudo-Dionysius Areopagita* (Wiesbaden, 1958). For a rejection of this see J. M. Hornus, "Les recherches dionysiennes de 1955 à 1960," *Revue d'Histoire et Philosophie religieuses*, XLI (1961), pp. 640-68.

<sup>4</sup> See Hipler, *Dionysius der Areopagite. Untersuchungen über Aechtheit und Glaubwürdigkeit der unter seinem Namen vorhandenen Schriften*, (Regensburg, 1961). For a rejection of this view see H. Koch, "Des pseudoepigraphische Charakter der dionysischen Schriften," *Theologische Quartalschrift* 77 (1895), pp. 353-420.

<sup>5</sup> See C. Pera, "Denys le mystique et la THEOMACHIA," *Revue des*

ture and is finally accepted as part of orthodox Christian teaching. The second period occupies the medieval period; it is during this time that the Corpus has its greatest influence in both the Eastern and Western Church. The third period begins with the reexamination of the genuineness of the Corpus in the 15th Century and continues to this day.

The first period of the history of the Corpus encompasses the period of its gradual acceptance as an orthodox treatise. The Corpus is first cited in connection with the monophysite controversies of the fifth and sixth centuries; it was claimed to be genuine work of Dionysius by the Monophysites at the great religious debate at Constantinople in 533. However the claims of genuineness did not go unchallenged; Hypatius, Bishop of Ephesus, strongly rejected the genuineness of the writings by claiming in part that neither Cyril (315-86) nor Athanasius (328-73) cite the Corpus, although both thinkers could have used it to great advantage. (Along broader lines, this objection amounts to noting that while the *Corpus Dionysianum* claims to be a first-century document, there is no mention of it in the literature until the sixth century. It is highly doubtful that a Corpus written by someone who was converted by, and presumably a student of, St. Paul should have not been cited by writers before the fifth century whose views the Corpus would help to substantiate.)

Nevertheless, despite the objection by Hypatius, the Corpus continued to gain acceptance by both heretical and orthodox thinkers. Gradually the orthodox defenders of genuineness came to include a

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*sciences philosophiques et théologiques*, 25 (1930), pp. 5-75. For a rejection of this view see F. Cavallera, "Dunouveau sur le Pseudo-Denys?" *Revue d'ascétique et de mystique* 17 (1936), pp. 90-95.

<sup>6</sup> See Honigmann, "Pierre l'Iberien et les écrits du Pseudo-Denys l'Aréopagite," *Mémoires de l'Académie Royale de Belgique, Classe des Lettres et des Sciences morales et politiques*, XLVII, fasc.3 (1952). For a rejection see Engberding, "Kann Petrus Iberer mit Dionysius Areopagita identifiziert werden?" *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, XXXVIII (1954), pp. 68-95.

<sup>7</sup> See U. Riedinger, "Pseudo-Dionysios, Areopagites, Pseudo-Kaisarios und die Akoimeten," *Byzantium Zeitschrift*, 52 (1956), pp. 276-296. For a rejection to this view see Hornus, *op.cit.*

<sup>8</sup> See E. von Ivanka, "La signification du Corpus Areopagitum," *Recherches de Science Religieuse*, 36 (1949), pp. 5-24.

<sup>9</sup> See Joseph Stiglmayr, "Eine syrische Liturgie als Vorlage des Pseudo-Areopagiten," *Zeitschrift für Katholische Theologie*, 33 (1909), pp. 383-385.

<sup>10</sup> See R. Roques, "Denys l'areopagite," *Dictionnaire Ascétique et mystique* . . . , col. 255.

<sup>11</sup> See R. Hathaway, *Hierarchy and the Definition of Order* pp. 25-29. Hathaway also notes that A. Kojève feels that the Corpus is by Damascus or one of his students although for Kojève, who communicated this sentiment to Hathaway in an unpublished letter, his position is not a demonstration as much as a strong conviction.

number of high ecclesiastical dignitaries. Finally, and most important, Maximus the Confessor defended the orthodox of the Corpus, especially against the Monothelite heresy. Maximus' scholia on the Corpus, together with his personal appearance at the Lateran Council of 649, paved the way at that conference for the rejection of monothelitism and the judgment that Dionysius was not a monothelite. From that period, no further objections were expressed concerning the genuineness of the writings.

The assumption of the orthodoxy and genuineness of the Corpus which followed the Lateran Council allowed the Corpus to have a profound influence on the subsequent development of Western and Eastern Medieval thought. This influence continued until the 15th Century in the west and it has persisted in the east. The Eastern Church has always been especially influenced by the writings; along with the work of Maximus the Confessor, the Corpus greatly influenced the two great Eastern theologians John Damascene (c675-749) and Gregory Palamas (d.1359).

The Corpus also had a decisive effect in the development of Western Medieval thought. After its initial appearance in the West at Rome it was sent to Pepin in France by Paul I (757-767). There the Corpus was first translated into Latin by Hilduin, the Abbot of the monastery of St. Denis, in or about 832. Subsequently, about the year 867, it was retranslated by John Scotus Erigena; his translation, his commentaries on the Corpus, and his great work *Periphuseon*—which was heavily influenced by the teaching in the Corpus—were decisive in the spread of the influence of the Corpus in the West. A number of medieval translations of and commentaries on the writings of Pseudo-Dionysius were produced during the Middle Ages. These writings exerted a profound and decisive influence on this period; at times they were second only to the Scriptures in authority.

During the Middle Ages the genuineness of the Corpus was not questioned. However, this situation changed rapidly during the Renaissance. The first serious objections to the genuineness of the Corpus during this period were leveled by Laurentius Valla (1407-1457); subsequent to this there emerged a literary controversy of great dimension as to the genuineness of the writings. Finally, in 1895, both Hugo Koch<sup>12</sup> and Joseph Stiglmayr<sup>13</sup> showed the unmistakable influence of

<sup>12</sup> H. Koch, "Pseudo-Dionysius Areopagita in seinen Beziehungeng zum Neuplatonismun und Mysterienwesen," *Forschungen zur christlichen Literatur- und Dogmengeschichte*, I Hefte 2-3, pp. 1-276.

<sup>13</sup> J. Stiglmayr, "Der Neuplatoniker Proklus als Vorlage des soggen. Dionysius Areopagita in der Lehre vum Ubel," *Historische Jahrbuch im Auftrag der Gorresgesellschaft*, XVI (1895), pp. 253-273; 721-748.

the writings of Proclus upon the Corpus. With this, the debate over the genuineness of the Corpus came for the most part to an end. However, the debate over the exact identity of the author of the Corpus continues to this day.

Contemporary interest in the *Corpus Dionysianum* does not center exclusively on the question of the authorship of the Corpus. Research continues (and has been increasing of late) from a variety of perspectives: historical, theological, and linguistic. Unfortunately, from a strictly philosophical perspective the Corpus has received little contemporary treatment, and its examination by contemporary English and American scholars has been grossly inadequate.

### III

The writings of Pseudo-Dionysius represent a highly significant expression of human thought. Despite the heavy dependence of Pseudo-Dionysius upon Proclus and the Greek tradition (as well as the Christian tradition), it is clear that the teaching which he (she?—who knows?) expresses is neither a mere eclecticism nor an imitation of earlier teachings. Moreover, in addition to the significant teaching which is contained in the Corpus, Pseudo-Dionysius shows a profound sensitivity toward, and creativity with, language; and this despite the deliberate obscurity which enshrouds the Corpus.

Pseudo-Dionysius continually characterizes his own theological/philosophical enterprise as a celebration; to engage in a discourse about the divinity is to celebrate. (ὑμνέω) the divinity. This celebration is of a twofold nature which embraces two traditions: philosophical and mystical, or demonstrative and initiative. Clearly, then, any translation must respect the author's own sensitivity toward language and at the same time respond to the intertwining of the two traditions throughout his writings.

The hymnological character of his writings frequently expresses itself in a poetic fashion, even in sections which are philosophically technical and difficult. Accordingly I have on occasion broken with a strict prose format in the presentation of the text, and have arranged certain parts of the text in verse form. I have done this for virtually all of the *Mystical Theology*, following the examples of Vanneste<sup>14</sup> and O'Brien.<sup>15</sup> I have also arranged several sections of the *Divine Names* in a verse form.<sup>16</sup> There are, of course, no indications in the text that certain passages are to be written in such a format, but I believe none-

<sup>14</sup> J. Vanneste, *Le Mystère de Dieu*, (Desclee de Brouwer, 1959), pp. 226-240.

<sup>15</sup> E. O'Brien, *Varieties of Mystical Experience*, (New York, 1964).

<sup>16</sup> Vanneste, *Op. cit.*, pp. 88, 115, 193.

theless that the poetic character of certain passages allows for such arrangement. Further, I believe that several of the long and complicated sections which I have put in verse form become clearer and easier to understand than if they had been left in prose form.

Although a poetic dimension in much of the *Divine Names* and *Mystical Theology* gives expression to the mystical and initiative tradition which pervades them, one must also recognize that the author's writings are also philosophical and technical in nature. Hence the translation must be sufficiently literal and exact so that it adequately brings out this sense of his writing. As the reader will discover, I have not hesitated to push the English language to the limits to provide a literal and yet, I hope, comprehensible translation. Admittedly my translation departs in many ways from more traditional translations; but I believe that the departure provides the foundation for a different and, I think, more faithful approach to the texts than that of the more traditional translations.

I have sought in the first place to enhance this translation through a series of extensive footnotes to the text of the translation. Further, I have frequently provided the Greek for particularly difficult, questionable, or unusual texts. I must emphasize that I am not attempting a critical edition of the text of the *Divine Names*, the *Mystical Theology*, or *Letters* I-V. I have in the main used the text which is printed in Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, III. I have also consulted the text of these writings which are printed in *Dionysiaca*, and the text of the *Divine Names* which is printed in C. Pera's edition of Thomas Aquinas' *Commentary on the Divine Names*. This is, I believe, justified as none of the variant readings seriously affects the meaning of the text. These latter editions have corrected the great number of minor spelling, punctuation, and accent errors in Migne, I have followed these corrections without notice, although I have noted any significant variations from Migne's text in the footnotes.

Second, I have provided numerous cross-references to the writings of Proclus and, occasionally, of Plotinus and Plato. These have been drawn primarily from the articles by Hugo Koch and Joseph Stiglmayr which were printed at the beginning of this century (see footnotes 12 and 13 preceeding). Stiglmayr's article deals exclusively with the dependence of Pseudo-Dionysius' treatment of Evil in *D.N.* IV. 18-35 upon Proclus' *de malorum substantia*. I should emphasize that I have not attempted to give all the references which Koch provides, but only major references. Third, I have provided cross-references to the writings of Thomas Aquinas; many of these are given at the end of Pera's edition of Thomas' *Commentary on the Divine Names*. However, I have also drawn references from the introduction to Pseudo-Dionys-

ius' writings in Migne. Fourth, I have provided references for direct quotes from the Bible; these have been drawn from Migne, Pera, and Rolt's<sup>17</sup> translation of the *Divine Names* and *Mystical Theology*. Fifth, I have provided some explanation of noteworthy features of the texts; these are drawn for the most part from Koch's article and are identified as such.

Numbers and single capital letters in the margin of the text refer to the page and "paragraph" of the text printed in Migne. Word phrases in square brackets contain matter which is not contained in the original Greek text but which is necessary to give the sense of the passage in English.

Let me now consider my translation of the Greek. First, I have attempted to provide each important Greek word with a unique English word or phrase. I have, however, not always been able or indeed always desired to do this; the *index verborum* at the end of the translation will provide the multiple translations of various terms.

Second, I have sought to avoid transliteration, but since this was not always possible I shall give here the exceptions to this rule. The multiple meanings of λόγος make it impossible to use any one English word to convey all the senses it may have in a given passage; accordingly, I have frequently transliterated it as "logos" and its plural form as "logoi." However, I have translated it as "reason" or "discourse" whenever the context permits. I have also transliterated the adjective θεαρχική as "thearchic." Finally, ἔρως and ἀγάπη are simply transliterated as eros and *agape*. But it has not always been possible to follow this convention, especially in verb forms; however, unless a reference to some form of the word "love" is given in the footnotes, the reader can assume that the word translated is ἔρως or some word related to it.

Third, I have not followed the custom in many translations of Pseudo-Dionysius' works—or of many other philosophical works for that matter—which capitalizes words which refer to the divinity (with the exception of "God"). For the use of capitals in this fashion—"Goodness," "Beauty," "Being," and so forth—inevitably suggests a reification of that to which these words refer. I do not feel that this is appropriate to Pseudo-Dionysius' thought, and I have accordingly avoided the practice, except where this is required by grammatical conventions.

Fourth, let me repeat my method of translation with regard to words related to εἶμι (to be). I translated the participle ὄν or ὡν as "be-ing"; I do this to stress the dynamic character of that to which this word refers. I do not use "existing," for this word suggests both the

<sup>17</sup> C. E. Rolt, *Dionysius the Areopagite on the Divine Names and on Mystical Theology*, (London, 1920). This is the current English translation.

later Medieval controversy between *essentia* and *existentia* and properly refers only to what is present now. However, for Pseudo-Dionysius ὢν or ὄν do not have the first signification and they are not limited to the latter. I render οὐσία as "being," τὸ ὄν and τὰ ὄντα as "that which is," or "a being" and "beings" respectively. I also render οὐσίαι as "beings" but always provide the word οὐσίαι in the footnotes when this occurs. Also, I render τὸ εἶναι or εἶναι, when appropriate, as "being." I thus distinguish it from being and be-ing for it is ambiguous with respect to these. I translate αὐτὸ τὸ εἶναι as "being itself." This translation need not conflict with that of "being" for οὐσία, for Pseudo-Dionysius never refers to αὐτὴ ἡ οὐσία. Indeed, for Pseudo-Dionysius being itself (αὐτὸ τὸ εἶναι) is the giving of being (οὐσιώσις) but it is not being (οὐσία). The distinction between all these terms is much clearer in the Greek than in English. However, these remarks should allow the reader to ascertain with some confidence what term is being used in the Greek.

Fifth, there are certain recurrent suffixes, prefixes, and so forth which Pseudo-Dionysius uses and which provide the basis for a number of compound expressions. I shall now explain my translations of these terms.

α-privative: This is translated by "non," or "-less." Thus, ἀνοῦσία is "non-being" or "being-less."

-ἀρχή (ἀρχία): As a suffix this is translated as "source." Thus ἀγαθαρχία is "source of goodness." However, and this is the only exception, θεαρχία is translated as "godhead."

αὐτό: This appears either as a prefix (τὸ αὐτοεἶναι) or as an intensive pronoun (αὐτὸ τὸ εἶναι). The meaning is the same in both cases and my example would be translated as "being itself."

πρό: This functions as a prefix in πρόων, προέχον, προαίων, and so forth. I translate it as "before." Thus πρόων is "before be-ing," προέχον is "before having" (although I sometimes follow the more customary "anticipate") and προαίων is "before eternity." Most of the words which contain πρό refer to the divinity; I do not translate πρό as "pre" because of certain misleading connotations. Thus to translate πρόων as "pre existing" suggests that the divinity is a being which exists independently of (prior to) all other beings; yet for Pseudo-Dionysius, the divinity is not a being which is independently of other beings. It is beings which are be-ing; the divinity: before be-ing. I should note, however, that I have frequently translated προνοήσις as "to subsist beforehand," for the syntax of the sentences in which the verb is involved simply to not readily yield to "before subsisting" as a translation of this verb. I would, however, maintain that the verb προνοήσις is to be understood in the sense of "before subsisting."



-της: This suffix is most always translated as “-ness.” Thus ἀγαθότης is “goodness.” However, θεότης is translated as “divinity.”

ὑπέρ: This functions as a prefix for many, many words in Pseudo-Dionysius’ writings. I translate it as “beyond.” Thus ὑπεράγαθον is “beyond good.” I do not use “super” to translate this term, for too frequently it is used to designate the divinity as the supreme or highest being.

Occasionally I translate ὑπέρ as “over,” as in ὑπερπλήρης (“overfull” or “beyond full”); as “supreme,” as in ὑπερίδρυσις (supreme foundations). The prefix in the latter case is used in a causal sense, and the use of “supreme” is appropriate provided we do not think of it as referring to a supreme being. ὑπέρ is translated as “more than” as in ὑπεράγνωστον (“more than unknown”) and ὑπεράρρητος (“more than ineffable”).

-ωσις: This suffix is translated as “making” or “giving.” Thus οὐσίωσις = “giving (making) of being,” and ζώωσις = “giving (making) of life.”

Sixth, Pseudo-Dionysius never refers to the divinity by the phrase καθ’ αὐτό, which is generally translated as “in itself,” for this phrase always marks οὐτία (being). Thus many references to the “divinity in itself” in the translation always translate a phrase such as καθ’ ἐαυτῶ, which lacks the technical significance of καθ’ αὐτό.

Seventh, and finally, while many compound terms in Greek such as προέχον or ὑπέρθεος would be translated properly as before-having or beyond-god, I have frequently dropped the hyphen in the translation so that the text is not unbearably cluttered with hyphens. At times, however, if the use of a hyphen helps clarify the sense of a passage or improves its style I have included it. The only term which is hyphenated for technical reasons is be-ing. (Also, and this primarily refers to the Introduction, the only term italicized for technical reasons is *being*. All other italics represent emphasis or identification of foreign words.



## INTRODUCTION

### SECTION I THE NATURE OF THEOLOGY

In this section I will consider Pseudo-Dionysius' understanding of the nature of theology by examining the nature and interconnection of affirmative and negative theology. I will also provide an initial examination of his conception of the divinity which will focus on the problem of the divine unity and difference. The analyses contained in this section are designed both to lay the foundation for subsequent analyses in later sections, and to be completed by them.

#### A. *Affirmative and Negative Theology*

In Chapter III of the *Mystical Theology* Pseudo-Dionysius provides a concise description and interrelation of his four theological treatises in terms of affirmative and negative theology. Thus the *Outlines of Theology*, the *Divine Names*, and the *Symbolic Theology* constitute affirmative theology; the *Mystical Theology* constitutes negative theology. However, Pseudo-Dionysius by no means adheres to this neat distinction between affirmative and negative theology in his works. Indeed, even a cursory reading of the *Divine Names* and *Mystical Theology* shows an intricate and bewildering convolution of affirmative (demonstrative) and negative (mystical) theology. We see an explicit recognition of this in the following text.

... the theological tradition is double, being on the one hand a tradition which is not expressed in words and which is mystical and, on the other hand, a tradition which makes manifest and is better known. One is symbolic and aims at initiation, the other is philosophical and demonstrative. What is not said is woven together with what is said. One persuades and makes known the truth of what is said, the other fulfills and situates souls in God through a mystical guidance which is not learned by teaching.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Letter IX.1.1105C-D. These two traditions are not on an equal footing; the demonstrative tradition is subordinated to and constantly points toward the mystical tradition. Indeed from the very beginning of the *Di-*

With this in mind, I will proceed to an initial description both of the tasks of affirmative and negative theology and of the works in which these are carried out.

Affirmative theology celebrates the divine causality; it seeks to know the divinity as cause of all that is through a knowledge of beings. In affirmative theology, the divinity is all-named and completely intelligible. The *Outlines of Theology* contain what is most proper to affirmative theology: Trinitarian theology and Christology. Thus, this work contains what is unique to Christian Theology.<sup>2</sup> It is not extant and, assuming the pseudonymous character of our author, it is probably a literary fiction. Nonetheless, the subject-matter of this work is discussed in various places in our author's writings.<sup>3</sup>

The *Divine Names* contains what we would consider Pseudo-Dionysius' metaphysics: the rational comprehension of the first principles and causes of all that is. For him this entails a celebration of the various powers which proceed from out of the divinity to beings as the intelligible causes of beings.<sup>4</sup> Since the *Divine Names* is the longest of his works it will be helpful for subsequent analyses if I provide a brief description of the contents and intention of this work.

Now the proper unfolding of the divine names does not begin until *Divine Names* IV. The first two chapters serve not merely to introduce the subsequent chapters of the *Divine Names* but they contain an articulation of the nature of theology itself and of the divinity. To this extent they complement the *Mystical Theology*, III. *Divine Names*, III contains a brief but important first section on the power of prayer. The remaining sections introduce Hierotheus (who is claimed to be Pseudo-Dionysius' teacher), establish the "relation" between Pseudo-Dionysius and Hierotheus, and contain material which suggests our author lives in 1st Century A.D. Hierotheus' works also appear to be not extant.

For Pseudo-Dionysius the totality of beings is to be understood as an analogically ordered hierarchy which is brought into being by the divinity and which is a manifestation of the divinity. As indicated above, an intelligible comprehension of the divine causality requires an analysis of the divine powers which let the totality of beings be. Chapter IV begins this task with the celebration of the divine names

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*vine Names* we are told "to manifest the power of the Spirit which moves the theologians according to which we are ineffably and unknowingly joined to what is ineffable and unknowable in a union which is superior to our rational and intellectual activities." (*D.N.* I.1.585B-588A).

<sup>2</sup> *M.T.* III.1032D-1033A.

<sup>3</sup> See *D.N.* I.3.592A-B, II.1-5.636C-641D, II.7.645B; *Letter* IV.1011A-C.

<sup>4</sup> See *D.N.* II.5.644A, II.6.649A.

of good, beauty, and eros. This is, however, not the only subject-matter of this chapter; the entire second half is devoted to a consideration of the problem of evil.<sup>5</sup>

Three of the fundamental categories of Neoplatonic thought are being, life, and intellect. These are considered in *Divine Names*, V-VII. Chapter V seeks to unfold the divine name of be-ing (*ὄν*) and contains a celebration of the divine causality as the before be-ing (*ὁ πρόων*). It also gives an exposition of the nature and function of the paradigms such as being itself, life itself, and so forth; this exposition is continued in *Divine Names* XI.9 and *Letter* II. Chapter VI celebrates the divine name of life. Chapter VII considers the divine name of intellect (*νοῦς*). First it seeks to explain how the divinity can be called intellect since it is without intellectual activity. Second, it contains a consideration of how we know the divinity; to this end it articulates the distinction between knowledge and unknowing (*ἀγνοσία*).<sup>6</sup> This chapter also contains a brief exposition of the nature of logos, truth, and faith.

Pseudo-Dionysius teaches that the divinity brings forth all beings as an analogically ordered hierarchy. The examination of this, which was begun in Chapter IV, is explicitly resumed in *D.N.* VIII, IX, and XI. Thus Chapter VIII considers the divine names of power,<sup>7</sup> justice and redemption; Chapter XI considers the divine name of peace. These chapters are also important for their bearing on the problem of evil.

Chapter IX considers the divine names of great, small, same, different, like, unlike, rest, and motion. This chapter is especially important for understanding the causal relation of beings to the divinity. For, the

<sup>5</sup> As we will see this problem is decisive for our author, and he implicitly recognizes this by his extended treatment of it. Indeed, this problem receives more concentrated treatment than any other single problem in the *Divine Names* or in the entire Corpus, for that matter. Fully one-sixth of the *Divine Names* is devoted to the problem of evil.

<sup>6</sup> This Chapter contains a brilliant and beautiful celebration of the divinity and of the whole of theology. It serves to complement *D.N.* I-II and the *M.T.* See *D.N.* VII.3.869D-872A.

<sup>7</sup> Chapter VIII is also important for its discussion on power; it will be worth a momentary digression to consider this. Generally, in Neoplatonic thought, power is given a preeminence over being. Thus, in Plotinus the one beyond being is the power of all that is (*Enn.* II.5.4, III.8.10); in Proclus' thought, power is the first procession from out of the one, while being marks the first reversion to the one (*El.Th.* 92). Since Pseudo-Dionysius places his celebration of power after that of be-ing, and since he regards being itself to be the first power to subsist away from the divinity, it may seem that Pseudo-Dionysius departs from the Neoplatonic tradition on this matter. Nonetheless, being itself and all the sources of beings are called the "powers which are given forth from out of the divinity to us" (*D.N.* II.7.645A). Further, even "being itself has its power to be from the power beyond being" (*D.N.* XIII.3.892B).

production of all that is is the manifestation of what is *like* the divinity.<sup>8</sup> Thus beings are to be understood as likenesses or images of the divinity; however, this means that they are to be understood in terms of the sameness and difference<sup>9</sup> which prevail between them and the divinity insofar as they subsist away from it. The celebrations of the other names are not as important as these except for the development of a straight, circular, and spiral imagery in characterizing the divine motion.

Chapters X and XII are relatively minor chapters in the *Divine Names*. Chapter X contains an all too brief treatment of the nature of eternity and time. Chapter XII explains the meaning of certain Scriptural names which are applied to the divinity. These include the names of "Holy of holies" and "God of gods." Chapter XIII is the culmination of the *Divine Names* with the unfolding of the "most difficult names," those of "one" and "completion." This chapter is also important for the manner in which it weaves together affirmative and negative theology.

The *Symbolic Theology* seeks to examine how the names of sensible beings are to be ascribed to what is divine (τὰ θεῖα) and, thus, to the divinity itself.<sup>10</sup> That is, it seeks to unfold the sense in which the theologians speak about the divine forms, anger, sadness, drunkenness, and so forth. This task has a special reference to the diverse and apparently disgraceful names which the Scripture attributes to the divinity. However, the task of *Symbolic Theology* seems to involve more than biblical exegesis; rather it seeks to celebrate specifically the visible world as a symbol or manifestation of the divinity.<sup>11</sup> This work is not extant and is probably a literary fiction. However, the *Ninth Letter* of Pseudo-Dionysius contains a discussion of some but not all of the topics which are said to be discussed in this work. Further, the *Celestial Hierarchy* has extended discussions of the legitimacy of applying sensible symbols to angels as well as a discussion of the significance of these symbols.<sup>12</sup>

Although sensible symbols are shown to be allegorical in charac-

<sup>8</sup> D.N. II.8.645C, IX.6.913C.

<sup>9</sup> Anything that is caused is a likeness of its causes. This entails that what is caused is different from its causes insofar as it proceeds out of its causes and that it is the same as its causes since it is united with them in reverting to them. See my section II.A for a fuller discussion of this matter. See also, Proclus, *El.Th.* 28, 30, 31, and 33.

<sup>10</sup> M.T. III.1033A. See Otto von Semmelroth, "Die Theologische Symbolike," in *Scholast.*, XXVIII (1952), pp. 1-11.

<sup>11</sup> D.N. IV.5.700C; *Letter IX*.1.1106B.

<sup>12</sup> The *Celestial Hierarchy* abounds with interpretations of sensible symbols that apply to angels; indeed, it seems to me that this work provides the foundation for extending the limited interpretation of symbols that is given in *Letter IX*.

ter—that is, they are shown to yield a purely intelligible interpretation<sup>13</sup>—symbolic theology is not simply reduced to metaphysics. Thus the theologians use sensible symbols to discuss the divinity in such a manner that the uninitiated will not comprehend what is said about what is divine.<sup>14</sup> Further, and more importantly, symbolic theology prevents us from being deceived into thinking that metaphysics or a purely rational description of the divinity can be complete.<sup>15</sup> For when we see that the divinity can be properly celebrated by all symbols, we are forced to recognize the ultimate inadequacy of all symbols. Indeed the culmination of negative theology is precisely the denial of all the symbols—whether rational or sensible—by which we try to comprehend the divinity.<sup>16</sup>

The *Mystical Theology* explicitly contains Pseudo-Dionysius' negative theology. In this theology one denies all that is so as to "undisguisedly manifest the unknowing which has been covered roundabout by all beings, and to see the separate darkness that is hidden by the light of beings."<sup>17</sup> The celebration of the darkness of unknowing culminates in a wholly silent and complete union with the ineffable divinity. For negative theology, the divinity is without name and wholly unintelligible.<sup>18</sup>

Let me now consider Pseudo-Dionysius' conception of the nature of theology in more detail. Theology, as the word suggests, is a discourse (logos) about God or the divinity (ἡ θεότης). For our author the divinity is "cause of all beings; but itself: nothing."<sup>19</sup> The proper celebration of the divinity requires that theology proceed both affirmatively and negatively. This double aspect of theology, and the greater truth of negative theology, is seen in the following text from the *Mystical Theology*:

For while to it one must posit and affirm all the positions of beings, as cause of all; one must more properly deny all of these as beyond be-ing beyond all . . . I believe that one must celebrate the positions and denials in an opposite way; for we position these by beginning from what is first, and descend

<sup>13</sup> Letter IX.1.1106C.

<sup>14</sup> Letter IX.1.1106B-C; C.H. II.2.140A-B.

<sup>15</sup> C.H. II.3.140C-141C.

<sup>16</sup> Thus with reference to a modern controversy, there is no point in discussing whether the divinity is more appropriately celebrated by "he" or "she" (or even "thou" or "it"). All these are equally appropriate and, with negative mystical theology, all are equally and totally inadequate and, hence, to be denied.

<sup>17</sup> M.T. III.1025C.

<sup>18</sup> D.N. I.588B; M.T. I.1.1000A. etc.

<sup>19</sup> D.N. I.1.588B, I.5.593C. ὅτι πάντων μὲν ἐστὶ τῶν ὄντων αἴτιον, αὐτὸ δὲ οὐδέν.

through those in the middle down to the last; we deny them all, having made our search for the highest principles from the last to the very first. We do this to know undisguisedly the unknowing which is covered roundabout by every knowledge in beings; we do this that we may see the darkness beyond being which is hidden by all the light in beings.<sup>20</sup>

Affirmative theology celebrates the divine causality. In it the divinity is manifested as cause, and beings are manifested as what is caused by the divinity. Since divine causation involves a differentiation of the divine unity<sup>21</sup> in what is and the manifestation of the divinity in (or more radically *as*) the pluralized unity which constitutes all that is, affirmative theology celebrates the differentiation of the divine unity.<sup>22</sup>

Now affirmative theology "proceeds from the topmost through the middle and down to the last" among beings. That is, it involves a descent from what is most like the divinity, and hence most unified and least diverse, down to what is "farthest" from the divinity—those material beings which are the most diverse and least unified. Affirmative theology begins with the *Outlines of Theology*, which is the summit of affirmative theology; this work celebrates the divinity as one-in-Three and is the most briefly spoken theology. It continues with the *Divine Names* and ends with the *Symbolic Theology*. This last work

<sup>20</sup> M.T. I.2.1000A-B, II.1025B. δέον ἐπ' αὐτῇ καὶ πάσας τὰς τῶν ὄντων τιθέναι καὶ καταφάσκειν θέσεις ὡς πάντων αἰτία, καὶ πάσας αὐτὰς κινώτερον ἀποφάσκειν ὡς ὑπὲρ πάντα ὑπερούση. Greek text to "... beyond be-ing beyond all."

There is a double sense to negative theology. On the one hand, negative theology functions within affirmative theology or, more specifically, metaphysics to express the preeminence of the divine cause. Here, if you will, the negations are "super affirmations." On the other hand, negative theology provides the foundation for mystical unity with the divinity. Here negative (mystical) theology denies all that is and all reference to beings and, by my interpretation, ultimately denies all affirmative theology and, hence, metaphysics. Negative (mystical) theology involves the ultimate denial of divine causality and preeminence.

For studies on negative theology in Pseudo-Dionysius see W. Voelker, *Kontemplation und Ekstase bei Pseudo-Dionysius Areopagite* (Wiesbaden, 1952); J. Vanneste, *Le mystère de Dieu*, (Paris, 1959)—this offers mainly a metaphysical interpretation. See also, C. Pera, "Denys le mystique et la *Theomachia*," *Revue des Science Phil. et Theol.* XXV (1936), pp. 5-75; H. C. Puech, "La ténèbre mystique dans la tradition patristique," *Etudes Carmellites*, (1938), pp. 33-53, and Michael Waldman, "Thomas von Aquin und die *Mystische Theologie* des Pseudo-Dionysius," *Geist und Leben*, XXII (1949), pp. 121-45.

For an indication of the distinction in negative theology which I am making see I. P. Sheldon Williams "The Greek Christian Platonist Tradition" in *The Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy*, pp. 468-71 and V. Lossky *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern*



constitutes the celebration of the visible world, and thus each member of this world, as a manifestation of the divinity; it is the most greatly spoken theology.<sup>23</sup>

The degree of discourse need not be correlated with the number of words in these works. Rather, the degree of discourse is a reflection of the unity and diversity of what is attributed to the divinity. Thus the multiplication of discourse which occurs in affirmative theology is a reflection of the multiplication of the divinity out of itself, as it passes from what is "nearest" to it to what is "farthest" from it. The divinity is "multiplied according to every conception of beings"<sup>24</sup> both in the differentiation of the divinity in all that is and in the celebration of this differentiation in affirmative theology. It is all named and all intelligible.

Negative theology reverses and ultimately denies what is celebrated in affirmative theology; indeed, as mystical theology it ultimately denies affirmative theology itself although this does not mean that affirmative theology is thereby declared to be false. Thus, beginning with the last among beings and denying these of the divinity, it progresses through the hierarchy of beings to the summit—the divinity as one-in-Three—and denies *all* of these of the divinity.<sup>25</sup>

Negative (mystical) theology is also in part a discourse about the divinity. Its most explicit execution is the long series of denials that

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*Church*, p. 26. Neither of these authors interprets negative (mystical) theology in the way that I do. Indeed Lossky's interpretation is considerably opposed to my own, for he rejects an understanding of Pseudo-Dionysius along Neoplatonic lines. Thus, for him, we cannot regard mystical unity as a simplification (ἀπλώσις) which requires the abolition of all difference between oneself and the one (divinity). This is Plotinus' "conception" (see *Ennead* VI.9.8.); it forms part of the basis of my interpretation of Pseudo-Dionysius.

<sup>21</sup> *D.N.* II.5.641D-644A, II.11.649B.

<sup>22</sup> Differentiation and causation are not identical if the *Outlines of Theology* is to belong to affirmative theology. For the *Outlines of Theology* celebrates the Trinity of Father, Son and Spirit which marks a theogony or god-genesis of the divinity. Now this genesis is a differentiation of the divine unity (*D.N.* II.3.640C). Yet, this differentiation does not involve causation, for the divinity is cause insofar as it has brought forth all beings into being (οὐσία) (*D.N.* I.3.592A). However, the theogonic Trinity is beyond-being (*D.N.* II.3.640C). The Trinity is a god-genesis which is uncaused. For Pseudo-Dionysius, the Trinity is what is differenced in the divine unity; it is not what is differentiated in the divine difference—this constitutes all that is caused (*D.N.* II.5.641D-643A).

<sup>23</sup> *M.T.* III.1033B. Indeed the *Symbolic Theology* would become impossible if we were to attempt to celebrate each individual being qua individual.

<sup>24</sup> *D.N.* V.8.824A. κατὰ πᾶσαν τῶν ὄντων ἐπίνοιαν πολλαπλασιάζεται.

<sup>25</sup> *M.T.* II.1025A.

constitute Chapters IV and V of the *Mystical Theology*. Yet this discourse does not exhaust negative (mystical) theology; for this theology culminates in the cessation of all discourse.<sup>26</sup> The celebration of the divinity by way of negation is most properly wholly without logos. The brevity of discourse which marks the summit of affirmative theology gives way to the absence of all discourse: a total and complete silence. Thus, in denying all that is, *theo-logos* is itself denied. Beyond all discourse: a total silence and unity with the ineffable—the darkness of unknowing.

Theology is both affirmative and negative. We must understand the affirmative and negative character of theology in terms of the tension between light and darkness and the tension between knowledge and unknowing. Now affirmative (καταφατική) and negative (ἀποφατική) derive from the verbs κατάφημι or καταφαίνω and ἀπόφημι respectively. These verbs respectively denote discourse which affirms and denies. Indeed, they commonly refer to the logical activities of affirmation and denial. However, in a more fundamental sense φήμι, (to say or declare) like φαίνω (to show), is connected with φῶς = φάος (light).

To declare something is to bring it to light, manifest it, and make it known in discourse. Thus a [true] affirmative statement [S is P] brings to light a sameness which prevails between what is denoted by the terms of the proposition. A [true] negative statement [S is not P] brings to light a difference between what is denoted by the terms of the statement. On this view affirmative theology would bring to light the sameness of the divinity and beings, where this sameness is understood analogically or on the basis of the causal likeness which prevails between beings and the divinity. On the other hand, negative theology would bring to light the radical difference between the divinity and beings. In other words, affirmative theology gives us a knowledge of the presence or immanence of the divinity in beings, negative theology “exhibits” the separation or transcendence of the divinity from beings. Since the divinity is cause of all, negative theology functions to protect the preeminence of the divine cause over all that is and to emphasize the fundamental unknowableness of the divinity to [finite] knowledge. Hence if we consider metaphysics to be the knowledge of the first cause of all that is, then affirmative and negative theology become complementary aspects of metaphysics, so that negative theology functions primarily to “correct” what is said in affirmative theology. Thus no matter how greatly affirmative theology celebrates the likeness of beings to the divinity, negative theology is always there to deny this likeness and to give expression to the transcendence of the divinity.

<sup>26</sup> M.T. III.1033B.

Thus, it "expresses" the *mysterium tremendum* as the wholly other.

Yet, so far we only express the "function" of negative theology within metaphysics. This does not exhaust negative theology. It seems to me that for Pseudo-Dionysius negative (mystical) theology, which culminates in a cessation of all discourse and in a radical unity with the divinity, requires the denial of affirmative theology and, thus, of metaphysics. Thus, instead of articulating the preeminence of the divine causality, negative (mystical) theology requires that we deny (stand away from or disregard) the divinity 'as' cause.<sup>27</sup> Far from isolating the divinity as wholly other, one engages in negative theology—the denial of all that is—to attain unity with the divinity itself; the non-other, non-same, beyond cause, and beyond-eminence.

Now affirmative theology celebrates the divine causality. Thus it brings the divinity to light as the cause of all; it brings all beings to light as what is caused by the divinity. But as caused, beings receive a likeness to the divinity. Now since likeness is to be understood in terms of sameness and difference, the production of beings by the divinity establishes a sameness and difference between beings and the divinity. For Pseudo-Dionysius "there is no precise relation between causes and what is caused; rather, what is caused has achieved an image of its causes. The causes themselves are apart from and founded beyond what they cause according to the logos of their own proper source."<sup>28</sup> Affirmative theology attains to a knowledge of the divinity in reference to beings;<sup>29</sup> that is, it brings to light the sameness and difference prevailing between beings and the divinity. Thus to affirm that the divinity is cause of all is not merely to affirm the sameness of beings and the divinity; it is also to affirm their difference through denials and negations.

Affirmative theology attains to a knowledge of the divinity in relation to beings by bringing to light the sameness and difference which

<sup>27</sup> Negative theology, understood here as the denial of the primacy of knowledge, does seem to be required for us to "recognize" that the divine cause is unlimitedly and simply be-ing. For Pseudo-Dionysius "If every knowledge is of beings and has its limits in beings, then that beyond every being is apart from every knowledge" (*D.N.* I.4.593A). For our author the divinity is beyond being; yet from the standpoint of knowledge, say the standpoint represented in Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, the divine cause is a limited being. For Pseudo-Dionysius, it would seem, Aristotle is one of those who is entangled (οἱ ἐνσυχυμένοι) in beings and imagine nothing to be beyond-beingly be-ing (οὐδὲν ὑπὲρ τὰ ὄντα ὑπερουσίως εἶναι φανταζομένης. *M.T.* I.1.1000A). Individuals such as this are not only barred from a mystical unity with the divinity, they also misconstrue the divine cause by denying it to be beyond being.

<sup>28</sup> *D.N.* II.8.645C.

<sup>29</sup> *D.N.* I.5.593C-D, VII.3.869C-D.

prevails between the divinity and beings. In this, affirmative theology dwells in the light of beings or, more specifically, in the intelligible light (*φῶς νόητον*). Yet "the dark is invisible in light and the more so as the light is greater; knowledge renders unknowing invisible and the more so as the knowledge is greater."<sup>30</sup> Affirmative theology is the knowledge of the divinity obtained through the light of beings; it attains to a knowledge of beings as beings, such a knowledge sees the divinity with the eye of the intellect. Yet this knowledge is precluded from and of itself prevents the unity of the soul with the divine darkness and unknowing.

While the task of affirmative theology is the comprehension of the divinity in relation to beings, the serious practice of negative (mystical) theology drives towards and culminates in an ecstatic unity with the divine darkness and unknowing.<sup>31</sup> Thus far from gazing upon the divinity with the eye of the intellect to bring the divinity to the light of knowledge and the realm of discourse, the one who seriously practices negative (mystical) theology must "shut out every knowing apprehension"<sup>32</sup> and with "sightless intellect"<sup>33</sup> enter into the mystical darkness of unknowing.

While affirmative theology stands in the light of beings, negative (mystical) theology denies what is revealed in this light by going away from it. Negative (mystical) theology requires the denial of affirmative theology itself. Yet affirmative theology manifests the sameness and difference which prevail between the divinity and beings. To deny all that is requires that one stand away from this sameness and difference. Thus one must stand away from the comprehension of the divinity as cause, for this comprehension always involves a knowledge of the divinity in its sameness and difference in regard to beings—a knowledge which must prevent the full unity of oneself with the divinity. Since one must abandon all sameness and difference to achieve a mystical union with the divinity, one does not experience the divine transcendence as the wholly other, rather, one is united to (the) non-other and non-same.

Negative (mystical) theology is neither a super-rational knowledge nor an aspect of metaphysics which serves to correct the affirmations

<sup>30</sup> *Letter I.1064A*. τὸ σκότος ἀφανὲς γινέται τῷ φωτί, καὶ μᾶλλον τῷ πολλῷ φωτί, τὴν ἀγνωσίαν ἀφανίζουσιν αἱ γνωσεῖς, καὶ μᾶλλον αἱ πολλαὶ γνωσεῖς.

<sup>31</sup> *M.T. I.1.997B*.

<sup>32</sup> *M.T. I.3.1001A*. Thus Moses ἀπομνεί πάσας τὰς γνωστικὰς ἀντιλήψεις.

<sup>33</sup> *M.T. I.1.997B*. ὁ ἀνομὰ νοῦς. Thus we have a fundamental reversal of the metaphor of the "eye of the soul" which guides Plato's thought; for a discussion of this metaphor in Plato see Paul Friedlander, *Plato: An Introduction* (p. 26).

which metaphysics makes about the divinity.<sup>34</sup> Negative (mystical) theology involves the radical denial of metaphysics and more generally of affirmative theology itself—although this does not mean that affirmative theology and, in particular, metaphysics are thereby declared to be false; for the divinity is all and nothing. Yet, somewhat surprisingly, for Pseudo-Dionysius this does not mean that negative (mystical) theology is to be understood as the denial of all knowledge whatever, for “we must attribute a knowledge beyond being to the unknowing of the [divine] beyond beingness, beyond logos, intellect and being.”<sup>35</sup> Indeed this hiddenness and divine darkness is the divine ray (ἄκτις),<sup>36</sup> a more than brilliant light. Thus, after distinguishing between affirmative and negative theology in terms of light and darkness, knowledge and unknowing, and seeing and not seeing, it seems that we must cancel these distinctions in an apparently monstrous contradiction. We see the apparent collapse of these distinctions in the following text:

Into the dark beyond all light we pray to come, through not seeing and not knowing, to see and to know that beyond sight and knowledge—itsself: neither seeing nor knowing.<sup>37</sup>

Why does Pseudo-Dionysius apparently cancel the distinction he makes, and how are we to understand this cancellation? I would offer the following explanation. While the divinity “is” wholly non be-ing (τὸ καθόλου μὴ ὄν),<sup>38</sup> it is not be-ing in no manner whatsoever (μηδαμῇ μηδαμῶς ὄν)<sup>39</sup> but “it is” beyond being (ὑπερούσιος). The divine non be-ing is not empty but overfull (ὑπερπλήρης)<sup>40</sup> or beyond the fullness of beings. In conformity with this, the divine darkness of unknowing

<sup>34</sup> By now it should be clear that we misunderstand the relation between affirmative and negative theology if we consider affirmation and negation either to describe merely the logical quality of statements or to be nothing more than logical operations which are performed by the intellect. For, first, affirmative theology gives rise to both affirmations and negations; it articulates the sameness and difference which prevail between the divinity and beings. Second, the denials carried out in negative (mystical) theology cannot be reduced to intellectual activities, for negative (mystical) theology requires the cessation of all intellectual activity.

<sup>35</sup> D.N. I.1.588A. τῆς γὰρ ὑπὲρ λογόν καὶ νοῦν καὶ οὐσίαν αὐτῆς ὑπερουσιότητος ἀγνωσία, αὐτῇ τὴν ὑπερούσιον ἐπιστήμην. See also D.N. VII.3.872A-B. For other references to ὑπερουσιότης see D.N. I.5.593C, II.4.641A; Letter IV. 1072A.

<sup>36</sup> M.T. I.1.1000A.

<sup>37</sup> M.T. II.1026A. κατὰ τοῦτον ἡμεῖς γενέσθαι τὸν ὑπέρφωτον εὐχόμεθα γνώφον, καὶ δι’ ἀβλεψίας καὶ ἀγνωσίας ἰδεῖν καὶ γινῶναι τὸ ὑπὲρ θεῶν καὶ γινώσιν αὐτὸ τὸ μὴ ἰδεῖν μηδὲ γινῶναι.

<sup>38</sup> D.N. IV.19.716C-D.

<sup>39</sup> D.N. IX.4.912C.

<sup>40</sup> D.N. II.10.648D, 10.649A, XIII.1.977C; Letter IV.1072B.

is thrust beyond (ὑπερβολή) beings<sup>41</sup> and is overfull of these. If the darkness of unknowing is a knowledge; it is not a knowledge of beings or be-ing. Rather, knowledge ("as" divine unknowing): nothing.

The distinction between affirmative and negative theology has been discussed in such a way that it might seem that these are opposed to one another. However, "think not that affirmations and denials are opposed, but rather that long before is that—which is itself beyond all position and denial—beyond all privation."<sup>42</sup> Thus if the divine darkness of unknowing is to be called an overfull light and knowledge, it is not to be understood as a knowledge which stands opposed to the knowledge of affirmative theology; rather, it comprehends and completes this latter knowledge through denying it.

But, again, the denial of affirmative theology in negative (mystical) theology is not a declaration of the falseness of affirmative theology. The silencing of all discourse in order to belong wholly to the divinity does not render discourse itself false. Indeed, to maintain that it does is to conceive of negative and affirmative theology as opposed to one another in such a way as to make them stand against each other and compete with each other. But this is not so. For indeed, if truth be conceived as the correct comprehension of what is, it is precisely affirmative theology that is true, for it examines what is (beings) as such. To be sure affirmative theology may be false if it does not correctly articulate the nature of what is as this is accessible to intellect and reason, but it is not rendered false by negative (mystical) theology.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>41</sup> D.N. IV.3.697A, 10.708A, 11.708B, V.9.825A.

<sup>42</sup> M.T. I.2.1000B. καὶ μὴ οἰέσται τὰς ἀποφάσεις, ἀντικειμένους εἶναι ταῖς καὶ καταφάσεσιν, ἀλλὰ πολὺ πρότερον αὐτὴν ὑπὲρ τὰς στερήσεις εἶναι τὴν ὑπὲρ πᾶσαν καὶ ἀφαίρεσιν καὶ θέσιν.

<sup>43</sup> Before proceeding to the next section it is appropriate to make a comment on the demonstrative character of affirmative theology and, especially, of the *Divine Names*. Affirmative theology encompasses the "demonstrative tradition which binds fast the truth of what is said." Yet one will look in vain through the *Divine Names*, the only work of affirmative theology which we possess, to find the sort of demonstration that one is accustomed to finding in most philosophical literature. One need only compare Proclus' *Elements of Theology* or Damascius' *Dubitaciones et Solutiones* to find a teaching similar to that of Pseudo-Dionysius which is expressed in the context of a rigorous system of theorems and demonstrations; I should note that Pseudo-Dionysius recognizes the legitimacy of such demonstration but chooses to avoid that style. This is because Pseudo-Dionysius intends his own works to merely be an explication of the writings of his "mentor" Hierotheus, which do contain such rigorous demonstration, such that he does not tautologically repeat what Hierotheus has already stated. (see D.N. III.2-3).

The *Divine Names* (as well as the *Mystical Theology*) is addressed to Timothy who is said to be a co-presbyter of Pseudo-Dionysius but who is less skilled in divine matters than he is. However, Timothy is a presbyter;

## B. Divine Unity and Difference

My task now is to analyse Pseudo-Dionysius' understanding of the divine unity and difference. I will concentrate my attention on *Divine Names* II where this matter is extensively discussed. This chapter begins by strongly emphasizing that all the divinely suitable (*θεοπρεπώς*) divine names refer to the whole divinity. That is, the "whole thearchic [divine] constitution"<sup>44</sup> is to be celebrated by us.

The writings always celebrate the divinely showing divine names not partially but of the whole, all complete, wholly complete and full divinity. Thus all of these are to be attributed indivisibly, absolutely, wholly and in an unreserved manner to the entire wholeness of the wholly complete and entire divinity.<sup>45</sup>

The divine names are to be attributed in this way so that we do not cleave asunder the unity beyond unity (*ἕναδ ὑπερηνωμένως*).<sup>46</sup> For Pseudo-Dionysius the divinity is named unity (*ἕναδ*) "on account of the simplicity and unity of its partlessness beyond nature."<sup>47</sup> The term "whole" refers to the divinity beyond unity, to the unity and simplicity of the divine partlessness or simplicity. Here, "whole" means "partless"; that is, "whole" is to be understood without reference to parts.

The whole divinity: a partless unity. The wholeness which is the divinity does not refer to a whole of parts but to that beyond and before every whole and part—although it is at once every whole and part.<sup>48</sup> Now the phrase "whole of parts" suggests a unified plurality or, more appropriately, a pluralized unity. But it is precisely beings which are of this sort. Thus if a being as such is a whole, its parts would be all that pertains to it. The parts of a being in the broadest sense are

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thus he has been initiated to some extent in theological matters and for the most part is presented as being already persuaded of what Pseudo-Dionysius and Hierotheus teach. Thus in the *D.N.* and in the *M.T.*, our author is under no burden to demonstrate the basic truth of what he is teaching; he is not out to convert an un-holy one. Further, Timothy is said to have access to the works of Hierotheus in which the fundamental demonstrations of what Pseudo-Dionysius says are given.

(Indeed, Pseudo-Dionysius' main reason for creating the character of Hierotheus seems to be that of relieving him of the responsibility in engaging in full scale and rigorous demonstration. For although two of the most beautiful texts in the *Divine Names* are attributed to Hierotheus (viz. *D.N.* II.11 and *D.N.* IV.17) they contain nothing more than what is said in some way by Pseudo-Dionysius himself.)

<sup>44</sup> *D.N.* II.1.636C. τὴν θεαρχικὴν ὅλην ὑπαρξίν.

<sup>45</sup> *D.N.* II.1.636C.

<sup>46</sup> *D.N.* II.1.637A.

<sup>47</sup> *D.N.* I.4.589D.

<sup>48</sup> *D.N.* II.10.648C.

its aspects and, from the standpoint of language, what is said of it.

We can express this matter in terms of the language of participation. For example, for Pseudo-Dionysius, a living being as such is a participant (*τὸ μετέχον*) in life itself. It participates in life itself in order to be living. Life itself is what is participated in (*τὸ μετεχομένον*) by living beings. Further, the life of each living being—its liv-ing—is its participating or participation (*μετοχή*) in life itself. The liv-ing (having life) of a living being is a part of that being; it is a way in which that being is.<sup>49</sup> Now one should note that life itself as such is not an aspect or part of any living being even though it is participated in by every living being. Further, no living being is a part of life itself although every living being is a manifestation of life itself.

Hence although all beings partake in the whole divinity, the divinity is not a part of them: “it is not something among beings or something in beings.”<sup>50</sup> Further beings are not parts of the divinity; it does not *have* beings and it is not a subject to which beings are referred. This asymmetry of “relation” between beings and the divinity is well illustrated in the following text pertaining to the divinity itself as the before be-ing (*ὁ πρόων*)—the divinity as cause of all beings and be-ing. Hence “*being* is of it [the before be-ing], it is not of *being*; *being* is in it, it is not in *being*; *being* has it, it does not have *being*.”<sup>51</sup>

Since the divinity “is” a partless unity such that “it is participated in wholly and entirely by all those that participate in it and by none in part,”<sup>52</sup> this entails that the divinity is wholly and identically present to all beings although, because of the diversity of logoi and natures, beings are not identically present to it.<sup>53</sup> Pseudo-Dionysius exemplifies this through the relation of a seal to its many impressions or copies. Thus, the seal is given singly and identically to each impression, so that each impression shares in the original form of the seal.<sup>54</sup> In each of the impressions there is a participation of the whole and the same seal and in none is there a participation in only a part of the seal. The obvious defect of this example is that the seal itself is a whole of parts for it is a being; it is not itself partless. Thus to say that each impression partakes in the whole seal implies that each impression partakes

<sup>49</sup> We are extending the relation between beauty (*καλός*) and what is beautiful (*τὸ καλόν*) which is given at *D.N.* IV.7.701C.

<sup>50</sup> *D.N.* VII.3.872A. *καὶ οὐκ ἔστι τὶ τῶν ὄντων οὔδε ἓν τινὶ τῶν ὄντων*. Yet the divinity is all and is all in all (*πάντα ἐν πᾶσι*).

<sup>51</sup> *D.N.* V.8.824A. *καὶ αὐτοῦ [τοῦ προόντος] ἔστι τὸ εἶναι καὶ οὐκ αὐτὸς τοῦ εἶναι, καὶ ἐν αὐτῷ τὸ εἶναι, καὶ οὐκ αὐτὸς ἐν τῷ εἶναι καὶ αὐτὸν ἔχει τοῦ εἶναι, καὶ οὐκ αὐτὸς ἔχει τὸ εἶναι*.

<sup>52</sup> *D.N.* II.5.649A.

<sup>53</sup> *D.N.* IV.20.720A.

<sup>54</sup> *D.N.* II.6.644B-C.



of all the parts of the seal; and this is, of course, inadequate to express the participation relation of beings to the divinity. When Pseudo-Dionysius says that no being participates in a part of the divinity he does not mean that all beings participate in all parts of the divinity; for, the divinity "is" partless.

I have so far utilized the term "whole" or "partless unity" to express the causal relation between beings and the divinity. I now wish to examine the sense of "whole" in connection with our author's understanding of beyond being (*ὑπερούσιος*). For him the divinity beyond being is cause of all; but, itself: nothing. It is present to all but apart from all. This theme resounds throughout the *Corpus Dionysianum* and speaks to the "immanence" and "transcendence" which is the divinity. This theme receives further expression in the tension between hiddenness and manifestness,<sup>55</sup> darkness and light,<sup>56</sup> unknowing and knowing,<sup>57</sup> and unity and difference.<sup>58</sup> The following analysis of the whole divinity will show that the whole divinity beyond being: wholly cause and wholly nothing, wholly present and wholly separated, wholly hidden and wholly manifest, wholly unknown and wholly known, wholly unity and wholly differentiated. Indeed, in the silencing of all discourse which takes place in the denial of all, "these" are wholly without sameness and difference.

Pseudo-Dionysius frequently expresses a contrast between light and darkness, hiddenness and manifestness, and so forth by using *μὲν—δέ* (on the one hand, on the other hand) and *ὡς—ὡς* (as [just]), (as [so]). Thus the divinity is, on the one hand, cause, and on the other hand, nothing.<sup>59</sup> All beings are attributed to it *as* cause; all are denied of it *as* beyond all.<sup>60</sup> But how are we to understand these contrasts which are so fundamental both to Greek thought and to our own? They seem to express manners or ways in which the divinity is, or conditions of its be-ing. When applied to our comprehension of the divinity—knowledge and unknowing—these contrasts suggest two ways in which the divinity is accessible to us, or that there are two stand-points for comprehending the divinity. But is this adequate?

These contrasts suggest that the divinity is a being which can be in a variety of ways. Now a being can, of course, be in a variety of

<sup>55</sup> *D.N.* I.1.588A, 2.588B-C, 4.592C, II.4.640D-641A, IV.2.696B; *M.T.* II.1025B; *Letter* II.1069B; *Letter* V.1076A; *Letter* IX.1.1104B, 1105C.

<sup>56</sup> *Letter* I.1064A; *D.N.* I.3.589A-B.

<sup>57</sup> *D.N.* I.1.588A-B, VII.3.872A-B; *M.T.* II.1025A; *Letter* I.1065A; *Letter* V.1073A.

<sup>58</sup> *D.N.* II.3.5.640B-643A, II.11.649A-C.

<sup>59</sup> See *D.N.* I.1.588B. καὶ αἴτιον μὲν τοῦ εἶναι πᾶσιν, αὐτο δὲ μὴ ὄν.

<sup>60</sup> See *D.N.* V.8.824B. ἀλλὰ πάντα ἔστιν ὡς πάντων ἀτίος . . . καὶ ὑπὲρ πάντα ἔστιν ὡς πρὸ πάντων ὑπερουσίως ὑπέρων.

ways. A being can, on the one hand, be hot and, on the other, be cold. A being can be *as* a lover or *as* an instructor. Of course the being (οὐσία) of a being is not a way in which it is. Rather, its being is that which determines the ways in which it is by determining what it is. Thus, the ways in which a being is—whether these be viewed as properties or accidents of the being—express the determinations of the beings or ways in which it is. These determinations and the consequent difference between them and other determinations or ways are expressed through μέν—δέ and ὡς—ὡς.

Ultimately even the various beings (οὐσίαι)—which fundamentally determine beings to be what they are—are themselves determinate: a being is *as* a man, or *as* a horse, or *as* a boat, or presumably *as* the divinity. The various beings (οὐσίαι) constitute the fundamental determinations or ways of be-ing, in terms of which other determinations or ways of be-ing are determined.

Thus we can use “*as*” to delineate the ways in which beings are and can be. Indeed every reference to a being which is expressed through a proposition expresses a way in which the being is or is not. For any attribution or denial of a predicate in respect of a subject indicates a determination or way of be-ing which either pertains to or does not pertain to the subject. Thus the propositions “the house is red” or “lightning is the cause of thunder” could be reformulated as “the house is *as* something red” and “lightning is *as* the something which is the cause of thunder.” Each of the predicates in these propositions expresses a determination of the subject or the determination which the subject essentially is. Indeed, even the “mere assertion” that something is—that is, that it *has* or participates in be-ing—expresses a determination of be-ing. Thus, to affirm that “the Loch Ness monster ‘exists’” is to affirm that something is be-ing as the Loch Ness monster. Conversely, to deny that a round square exists is to deny that something is as a round square. Our language like our knowledge is fundamentally directed towards and has its limits in being (οὐσία)<sup>61</sup>

Now for Pseudo-Dionysius, the divinity: be-ing (ὑπερουσίως), not somehow be-ing but be-ing simply and unlimitedly.<sup>62</sup> The divinity is

<sup>61</sup> D.N. I.4.593A.

<sup>62</sup> Let me briefly contrast Pseudo-Dionysius’ conception of the divinity as I will develop it with the one we find in Aristotle’s, Plotinus’ and Christian metaphysics.

For Aristotle, God (more precisely, the gods are) is the first principle and final cause of all beings—or, at least, of the eternal motion of the heavenly bodies. As such God is the first being (οὐσία), for God is completely actual. The actuality of God is thinking; since God is wholly self sufficient, he is intellect: thought thinking itself. For Aristotle, God is a determinate being which exists in itself (καθ’ αὐτό), which is a this some-

not a being nor the being (*οὐσία*) of beings; yet it is all beings and every being (*οὐσία*). The divinity: be-ing *ἵπερονσίως*. How are we to translate this adverb *ἵπερονσίως*? Well, this adverb is an adverb of manner; thus when it is attributed to the be-ing "of" the divinity it should tell us in what manner or how the divinity is. In this it should determine the divine way of be-ing. Now given the translation of *οὐσία* as essence or substance, we would render *ἵπερονσίως* as "superessentially" or "supersubstantially." Thus, to say that the divinity is superessentially, is to say that the divinity is (exists) in a super essential manner, a manner which transcends every finite essential manner of being. In other words, the divinity is preeminently essential or substantial.

Yet this interpretation does not reflect the negative character of *ἵπερ*. In interpreting the sense of *ἵπερονσίως* we must bear in mind that the divinity is *ἵπερῆνωμένως* ("beyond unity" or "beyond what is unified"). Further, we must interpret the preeminence (*ἵπερορχή*) which is the

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thing (*τόδε τι*) and which is knowable. Moreover, God is not unlimited because, for Aristotle, the unlimited is unknowable and is only a potentiality which can never be completely actualized. Thus the tension between God and "world" for Aristotle is that between the first member of the intelligible order and all else; it is not that between unlimited being and limited being (See *Met. X*).

For Plotinus, it is in terms of unity that beings are beings. Thus, although he accepts Aristotle's formulation of intellect as thought thinking itself and, like Parmenides, maintains that thinking and being are the same, he rejects intellect-being as the first cause. For intellect is; thus it is not absolutely one and, hence, it is not the source of its own unity. For Plotinus *being* (*οὐσία* or *ὄν*) and intellect both involve multiplicity. Thus, the source of all unity—the one: beyond all *being* and thinking; the one: unlimited and unknowable (although it is limited and knowable in bringing forth all that is from out of itself). The one is neither a being nor is it be-ing; it is not unlimited *being*. Thus, while the tension between the one and all that is is that between the unlimited and beings be-ing, it is not the tension between unlimited *being* and limited *being*.

For Christian thought in general, God is revealed as "I am who am" (Exod. 3:14); God is the creator of all that is limited: both intelligible and sensible being. Thus God transcends all that is limited and is unknowable *in himself* to all who are limited (although God is completely intelligible to himself and is knowable to us through his effects). God does not have being in a limited way; God is freed from all multiplicity and diversity and is supremely or excessively full of being. God is "an infinite ocean of being (*οὐσία* = substance)." That is, God is his own being; more radically, God is the being (*ens*) which is be-ing itself (*ipsum esse*). God is the being whose *essence* is simply to be. Thus God is the highest being (*ens summum*) and the most real or most actual being (*ens realissimum*). The tension between God and world is that between the unlimited and absolutely simple being (*ens*) which is be-ing itself (*ipsum esse*) and the limited and diverse beings which participate in (have) be-ing (*esse*).

divinity as "beyond-having." Now the term "beyond-unity" serves to deny any multiplicity to the divinity; indeed, it ultimately denies unity to the divinity as unity is understood to be correlative with multiplicity. However, it is beings, determinate ways of be-ing, which are unified multiplicities. They are such through participating in (*μετέχον*) the divine unity. Thus it is through *having* that the divine unity is differentiated into all that is—this includes every being (*οὐσία*). But the divinity: before-having (*προέχον*) and beyond-having (*ὑπερέχον*).<sup>63</sup> The divinity beyond every way of having (*ὑπεροχίως*) and beyond every way of unity (*ὑπερηνωμένως*): be-ing beyond every way of being or, more literally, beyond-beingly be-ing (*ὢν ὑπερουσίως*). Thus *ὢν ὑπερουσίως* is to be translated as "beyond-beingly be-ing." (Or, if we designated the determinations of being as beingly be-ing (*οὐσίως ὄν*), then divine be-ing: beyond beingly-be-ing.) Far from marking the divinity as be-ing in the highest manner or way, these adverbs deny that the divinity is any manner of be-ing.

We must emphasize that these adverbs of themselves do not deny be-ing; for be-ing beyond every way of being: be-ing simply and unlimitedly. However, they do deny that divine be-ing is a being!<sup>64</sup> Now it is precisely to avoid the misunderstanding that beyond beingly be-ing is a being that I use the colon ":" to write "the divinity: beyond-beingly be-ing," instead of "the divinity is be-ing beyond every way of being." For a similar reason it seems preferable to use adverbial expressions such as "be-ing simply and unlimitedly" rather than adjectival expressions such as "simple and unlimited be-ing." For since adverbs do not modify nouns we are not tempted to think of be-ing as a subject which is denoted by a noun. We must not, however, think be-ing simply as a verb. As I will show later, beyond beingly be-ing is prior to any distinction between a subject and its activities or a noun and a corresponding verb.

In light of these considerations we attempt to "express" the whole-ness which is the divinity. Thus, we may not understand preeminence-causality, hiddenness—manifestness, and so forth as conditions of the divinity, ways in which it is, or aspects of its be-ing. Rather, the divinity: wholly hidden and wholly manifest, wholly unity and wholly differenced, and wholly unknown and wholly known. Indeed, in the denial of all reason and logos we "see" that the wholly hidden: the wholly manifest, the wholly unity: the wholly differenced, and the

<sup>63</sup> The customary translation of *ὑπερέχω* is "to be superior to" or "to be pre-eminent over"; that of *προέχω* is "to anticipate."

<sup>64</sup> Pseudo-Dionysius does ultimately deny even be-ing. For the divinity beyond all: beyond be-ing beyond-beingly before all (*πρὸ πάντων ὑπερουσίως ὑπέρων*). *D.N.* V.8.824B.

wholly unknown: the wholly known.<sup>65</sup>

Yet is this not the greatest "absurdity" of all? Indeed it is. For we are not simply content with applying (apparently) contradictory notions to the divinity or even with regarding the divinity as wholly characterized by each of these "opposites." Rather, there is the insistence that the contradiction and opposition between "these" be denied. But how can what is wholly contradictory be wholly the same? Yet is it clear that in denying the ultimate difference about these "opposites" that we are affirming their sameness? Now, to be sure, the wholly hidden: nothing other than the wholly manifest. But this does not mean that it is the same. For if the divinity "itself" is absolved from all multiplicity it is neither the same as nor different from itself or any other. For sameness and difference emerge only in the differentiation of the divinity; they are *both* marks of multiplicity. Now sameness and difference are clearly fundamental to our knowledge of the divinity, for in knowledge we comprehend the sameness and difference prevailing between the divinity and beings. Further, logos itself in all its aspects moves within beings; it dwells within and manifests the sameness and difference prevailing between the divinity and beings. It necessarily and truly multiplies the unity beyond every way of unity. But if we are to take seriously the denial of all logos and reason in negative (mystical) theology then we must also deny all sameness and difference.

Logos (discourse) manifests the divinity to us. Now all *logia* (or statements) "about" the divinity pertain to the whole divinity. Yet some *logia* are said in a unified way and others are said in a differenced way,<sup>66</sup> for the divinity is unified and differenced. I now intend to examine what is unified and what is differenced in the whole divinity. This will entail an examination of the divine unity and difference.

I would make one preliminary observation. Pseudo-Dionysius speaks about *θεολογία* ("statements" about God) which are unified and differenced.<sup>67</sup> Consequently the terms *τὰ ἠνωμένα* and *τὰ διακεκριμένα* are frequently translated as "statements or names which are unified" and "statements or names which are differenced."<sup>68</sup> This translation serves

<sup>65</sup> D.N. VII.1.865C.

<sup>66</sup> D.N. II.2.640A.

<sup>67</sup> Thus the title of D.N. II *περὶ ἠνωμένης καὶ διακεκριμένης θεολογίας*. We would note that *logia* seems to have a wider extension than "names" (*ὄνομα*); for we name the divinity only insofar as it is manifested to us (D.N. II.7. 645A); all names are *logia*. However, "phrases" such as "beyond good," "beyond being," and so forth, are *logia* but they do not manifest the divinity to us.

<sup>68</sup> For example *nomina copulata* and *nomina incopulata*; see D.N. II.3, the translation by Corderi in Migne.

to restrict the question of what is unified and differenced to a problem about language. However, this is not at all the case. For it is the name and *χρῆμα* ("thing" named) of the Father, Son and Spirit which are differenced;<sup>69</sup> it is the gifts of being and life which are unified.<sup>70</sup> Thus the terms τὰ ἡνωμένα and τὰ διακεκριμένα refer both to *logia* and also to that to which *logia* refer. Hence, it seems preferable to translate these simply as "what is unified" and "what is differenced."

Pseudo-Dionysius' discussion of this matter is contained in *Divine Names*, II.3-5. *Divine Names*, II.3 contains an initial characterization of what is unified and what is differenced. *Divine Names*, II.4-5 offers an expanded discussion of these by referring to the divine unity and difference. In *Divine Names*, II.3 our author gives two "classes" of what is unified: first, whatever is said by way of preeminent denial such as beyond good (ὑπεράγαθον) or beyond being (ὑπερούσιος); second, *logia* that pertain to causality (αἰτιαλόγικαι) such as good, be-ing, and whatever marks the gifts which proceed out of the divinity. In contrast to these, the Father, Son and Spirit are said to be differentiated.

In *Divine Names*, II.4-5 Pseudo-Dionysius again explains what he considers to be unified and differenced although his explanation proceeds with reference to the divine unity and difference. Here the divine unities are "the hidden and non-wandering supreme foundations of the more than ineffable and more than unknown steadfastness."<sup>71</sup> However, the divine differences are "the good formed processions and manifestations of the godhead."<sup>72</sup> That is, the divine difference is "the good showing procession of the divine unity which makes itself many and multiplies itself, beyond every way of unity, by its goodness."<sup>73</sup>

Now since "some unities and differences are proper to the divine unity and some to the divine difference"<sup>74</sup> we would expect a discussion of what is unified in the divine unity, what is differenced in the divine unity, what is unified in the divine difference, and what is differenced in the divine difference. We are given an account of the first three but, somewhat surprisingly, we are given no discussion of the fourth (what is differenced in the divine difference). I will attempt a discussion of this at the end of this section.

<sup>69</sup> D.N. II.3.640C.

<sup>70</sup> D.N. II.5.644A.

<sup>71</sup> D.N. II.4.640D. τὰς ὑπεραρρήτου καὶ ὑπεραγνώστου μονιμότητος κρυφίας καὶ ἀνεκφοιτήτους ὑπεριδρύσεις.

<sup>72</sup> D.N. II.4.640D.

<sup>73</sup> D.N. II.5.641D-644A. ἡ ἀγαθοπρέπη προόδους τῆς, ἐνώσεως τῆς θείας, ὑπερ-  
ηνωμένως ἑαυτὴν ἀγαθότητι πληθυνσίσης τε καὶ πολλαπλασιαζούσης.

<sup>74</sup> D.N. II.4.641A.

What is unified in the divine unity is expressed by *logia* which are of two sorts: first, *logia* which mark the divinity as the ultimate source of all that is—for example, “constitution beyond being” (ἡ ὑπερ-ούσιος ὑπαρξίς), “divinity beyond god” (ἡ ὑπέρθεος θεότης), “goodness beyond good,” and so forth; second, contrasting pairs of *logia* such as “ineffable,” “all intelligible,” “position of all,” “denial of all,” and “beyond all position and denial.” However, all the *logia* which mark what is differenced in the divine unity all pertain to the independent subsistence of the Father, Son and Spirit.<sup>75</sup>

The divine difference is the production of all that is. Here the gifts of divine powers such as good, being itself, life itself, and so forth are unified in this difference.<sup>76</sup> Indeed, all that comes to be and all *logia* that refer to these are unified in the divine difference. As I mentioned before, there is no explicit discussion of what is differenced in the divine difference. This is somewhat surprising, for the totality of beings constitutes a unified *plurality*. Further, Pseudo-Dionysius especially mentions that his discussion of this general problem will be clear and systematic.<sup>77</sup>

As I indicated, Pseudo-Dionysius’ discussion of what is unified and what is differenced is contained in *Divine Names* II.3-5. However, *Divine Names* II.4-5 offers a more expanded discussion of unity and difference than does *Divine Names* II.3; also it is not clear that *Divine Names* II.3 can be reduced to the other sections. Thus in *Divine Names* II.4-5 the *logia* of what is unified in the divine unity point for the most part to the divinity as the abiding source of beings. As I will show, some of these *logia* involve a “preeminent denial” and serve to “express” the separation or transcendence of the divinity. Nonetheless they still mark the divinity in reference to beings.

Yet this is not the most radical function of the preeminent denial. For the mystical denial ultimately involves a denial of all reference to beings and, as we will see in my section IV, ultimately denies the divinity “as” source and cause. This radical denial is implicit in *Divine Names* II.3 despite the fact that two *logia* which indicate this—beyond-source (ὑπερὑπαρξίς)<sup>78</sup> and beyond be-ing (ὑπέρων)<sup>79</sup>—are not listed there. For now I will explicate the sense of preeminent denial as this is expressed in the prefix ὑπέρ in a causal fashion. Later in Section IV I will distinguish between a causal and non-causal sense of ὑπέρ in light of a distinction between ὑπέρ and πρό.

<sup>75</sup> D.N. II.4.641A-II.5.641D.

<sup>76</sup> D.N. II.5.641D-643A.

<sup>77</sup> D.N. II.4.640A.

<sup>78</sup> D.N. I.5.593C.

<sup>79</sup> D.N. V.8.824B, VII.1.865C, XIII.3.981A; M.T. I.2.1000B.

Let us see why the distinction between what is unified and what is differenced is introduced in the *Divine Names*. The opening section of *Divine Names* II is largely concerned with showing that all *logia* about the divinity are said of the whole divinity. Pseudo-Dionysius takes particular pains to show that this is true in respect of the *logia* by which the Scriptures refer to the divinity. In the process of doing this he seems to obliterate the difference between the "persons" of the Trinity. A glance at some of the texts he cites in this connection will serve to confirm this. "I and the Father are one."<sup>80</sup> "All that is mine is yours and all of yours is mine."<sup>81</sup> Indeed, Pseudo-Dionysius himself says that "He (Christ) attributes in a common and unified way to the divine Spirit all those which are the Father's and his."<sup>82</sup> All of this clearly suggests that there is no difference between the Father, Son and Spirit. However, to deny such a difference is untenable within the sacred tradition (*ἱεραπαράδοσις*) to which Pseudo-Dionysius claims allegiance.<sup>83</sup> Thus it becomes necessary to affirm a difference between the persons of the Trinity "to protect those which are founded there in themselves and which are the most simple, undiminished and unchanged."<sup>84</sup> Hence Pseudo-Dionysius introduces the distinction between what is unified and what is differenced; he claims that this distinction is made by the theologians themselves.<sup>85</sup>

Now the phrases "what is unified" and "what is differenced" do not refer to the relation of what is unified and differenced with the divinity itself; for all of these are said of the whole divinity.<sup>86</sup> Rather, these phrases refer to the relation of what is unified and differenced among themselves. Thus Father, Son, and Spirit are said to be differentiated from one another such that there is "no interchange or commonness to be introduced into [their names or themselves]."<sup>87</sup> The Father is not the Son, the Son is not the Spirit, and the Spirit is not the Father. Hence although Father, Son, and Spirit are each wholly and entirely divinity, a difference prevails between them such that they subsist apart from one another. However, the persons of the Trinity are not simply differenced; rather, of all that is differenced they subsist in the most profound unity. Thus "the abiding and foundation of the divine persons in one another, which is beyond every way of unity and is

<sup>80</sup> John 10:30.

<sup>81</sup> John 16:15.

<sup>82</sup> *D.N.* II.1.637C.

<sup>83</sup> *D.N.* II.2.640A.

<sup>84</sup> *D.N.* II.2.640A.

<sup>85</sup> *D.N.* II.2.640A.

<sup>86</sup> *D.N.* II.1.636C, 3.640B.

<sup>87</sup> *D.N.* II.3.640C.



confused in none of its parts”<sup>88</sup> is unified in the divine unity. However it is the divine unity which is differenced in the divine unity.

How are we to understand what Pseudo-Dionysius means by what is unified in the divine unity? For him the divine unities are the “hidden and non-wandering supreme foundations of the more than ineffable and unknown steadfastness.” These unities are the ultimate sources of beings. However, the plural “supreme foundations” is misleading; as we will see, “these” are without difference in the divine unity. The most curious word in the definition of the divine unity is *ὑπεριδρύσεις*. Although this word is derived from the frequently used verb *ὑπεριδρύω* (to establish beyond) this occurrence of *ὑπεριδρύσεις* is the only occurrence in the entire *Corpus Dionysianum*.<sup>89</sup> Now my normal rendering of *ὑπέρ* is “beyond.” However, in this instance “supreme” seems more appropriate for it marks the divinity as ultimate source. Thus, I will render *ὑπεριδρύσεις* as “supreme foundations.” However, the reader must remember that “supreme foundations” does not refer to a supreme being!

Now *ὑπεριδρύσεις* in this text marks the divine unity as ultimate source. The connection between unity and source is indicated when Pseudo-Dionysius calls the divine unity the “authoritative Triad” (*ἐναρχική Τριάδ*).<sup>90</sup> My translation of *ἐναρχική* as “authoritative” is the standard translation of this term. However, it fails to bring out the connection between one (*ἓν*) and source (*ἀρχή*) which is important for Pseudo-Dionysius and the Neoplatonic tradition generally. As Plotinus says in a way that is decisive for subsequent Neoplatonism “it is in virtue of unity that beings are beings.”<sup>91</sup> Thus it is the one that is the source of beings as beings. Since the one is the divinity for Pseudo-Dionysius, it is the divine unity which is the ultimate source of all that is. The divinity is the one (*ἓν*)—source (*ἀρχή*).

It is in terms of source that we are to understand the *logia* such as divinity beyond god, goodness beyond good, and so forth. Thus the goodness beyond good celebrates the source of all that is good, the source which is beyond all that is good and all goodness. This goodness beyond good is source not only of what is good but also of goodness itself, the power of goodness which comes forth from the divinity and which all beings partake of in order to be good. Now since goodness itself is commonly taken as the source or cause of what is good, the goodness beyond good is beyond the source of goodness;

<sup>88</sup> *D.N.* II.4.641A.

<sup>89</sup> The term is not even listed in the 10th edition of Liddel, Scott, and Jones’ *Greek-English Lexicon*.

<sup>90</sup> *D.N.* II.4.641A.

<sup>91</sup> Plotinus *Ennead* VI.9.1.

it is the "source beyond every source" (ἀρχὴ ὑπεραρχικός).<sup>92</sup>

The *logia* such as "goodness beyond good" mark the divinity as ultimate source of all that is. But since we only know the divinity in reference to beings which are caused by the divinity, we can only "indicate" this divine source of goodness by denying its likeness to beings. This denial serves to express the preeminence of the divinity over all. Thus these *logia* express a preeminent denial (ὑπεραρχικῶς ἀφαίρεσις). This denial is expressed through the prefix *ιπέρ*.

These *logia* seek to "express"—by denying any possibility of expression—the partless or undifferentiated unity which is the abiding divine causality. When we say that these *logia* "express" the divine preeminence over beings we are using the term "preeminence" in a sense which is different from that which is ordinarily given to it. For example, when we say that someone is preeminently courageous we mean that that person is courageous in a way that surpasses all other courageous persons. However, we never intend to say that this person is identical with his courage or that the person is courage itself. Rather, we mean that this person *has* courage in a most perfect way. To say that a person is preeminently courageous then, does not mean that the difference between this person and his courage is abolished.

We come closer to "understanding" the divine preeminence by examining the preeminence of a standard or paradigm. Thus we say that courage itself is preeminent over the courageous individuals which participate in it. On the one hand, its preeminence over courageous individuals is its causal function, for it is the cause of courage in courageous persons. But, on the other hand, courage itself does not *have* courage. Courage itself is simply courage (although it is not absolutely simple). Here preeminence clearly marks the simplicity of what is preeminent with respect to that over which it is preeminent. Nonetheless, courage itself is not absolutely simple but is a determinate being which, for example, *has* being; thus it *is* many.

For Pseudo-Dionysius the divinity: be-ing beyond every way of being, beyond every way of unity, beyond every having. That is, the divinity: be-ing simply and unlimitedly. The preeminence of the divinity over beings is not that of one being—not even the highest being—over all other beings. The preeminence which is the divinity is the absolution from all having and multiplicity. Thus the goodness beyond good which is the divine unity is not something which "is" good nor is it even goodness itself where this is taken as a power which can be distinguished from other powers. The goodness beyond good: the un-

<sup>92</sup> See *D.N.* XI.6.956B and *Letter* II.1069A-1070A. See John Eriugena, *Periphuseon* I.14-15, for similar interpretation.

differentiated divinity beyond all goodness and what is good. What is unified in the divine unity is not *made* one; it is beyond all uni-fication. Thus goodness beyond good, divinity beyond good, and so forth are nothing other than "one another."

Along with these source-*logia* we have been discussing, we find another group of *logia* which are said to be unified in the divine unity and which are expressed in contrasting pairs: "unknown" and "all intelligible," "all named" and "nameless," "position of all," "denial of all," and "beyond all position and denial." As with the source-*logia*, these *logia* also relate the divine unity to the divine difference; for it is only in reference to beings that the divinity is all-named or all-intelligible. Yet "these" are unified in the divine unity; thus, they are freed from difference (and from sameness). To be sure, we "see" this only in the culmination of negative theology: the abandonment to unknowing.

The writings call the completely lit light "invisible"; they call the many named and greatly celebrated the "ineffable and nameless"; that present to all and discoverable to all, the "incomprehensible and untrackable." For this reason the divine Apostle is even now said to have celebrated the foolishness of God by calling it that which appears contrary to reason and absurd in itself but which leads us to the ineffable truth before all logos.<sup>93</sup>

Let me now consider what is unified and differenced in the divine difference. For Pseudo-Dionysius the divine difference is the procession of the divine unity out of itself in which all beings are let be. The sources of beings within this procession are the powers such as being itself, life itself and so forth.<sup>94</sup> These are also called the giving or making of being (*οὐσιώσις*) or the giving or making of life (*ζωώσις*).<sup>95</sup> For Pseudo-Dionysius these are unified in the divine difference. Indeed, all beings are unified in the divine difference; for the differencing of the divinity *makes* all things one.<sup>96</sup>

Nevertheless, beings do not subsist as simply one. They subsist both individually and collectively as a unified plurality or, more appropriately, as a pluralized unity. All beings are a pluralization or multiplication of the divine unity. Thus we would expect Pseudo-Dionysius to provide an exposition of what is differenced in the divine difference. Although he does not do this explicitly, it is clear from the example that he uses to illustrate how persons of the Trinity are uni-

<sup>93</sup> D.N. VII.1.865C.

<sup>94</sup> D.N. XI.6.953D.

<sup>95</sup> D.N. II.4.641A, XI.5.955A.

<sup>96</sup> Thus the divine eros is productive of unity (*ἐνοποιός*). See D.N. IV.15.713B.

fied and differenced that we can develop a "category" of what is differenced in the divine difference. Thus

... the lights of many lamps which are in one room are wholly in one another—for the lights of all are mingled with one another—but, nonetheless, they have a precise and distinct difference by which they subsist apart from one another; they are differenced in being unified and they are unified in being differenced . . .<sup>97</sup>

Now the persons of the Trinity are said to be differenced from one another in that they subsist apart from one another. This suggests that a general formulation of the meaning of the phrase "what is differenced" is "what subsists apart and independently." Indeed, in the example we just cited the lights of the various lamps are differenced from one another for precisely this reason. Hence, there is no reason why we cannot regard all beings as differenced from one another. All beings subsist in a unity and are differenced; they are both unified and differenced in the divine difference.

Yet we may carry the interpretation of what is differenced in the divine difference even further. For the divine difference is the bringing forth of all beings into being and be-ing. But this difference is the procession of the divine unity: its multiplication and being made many.<sup>98</sup> The divinity itself comes out of itself in the divine difference. What then is differenced in the divine difference? The divinity.

<sup>97</sup> *D.N.* II.4.641A-B.

<sup>98</sup> See especially, *D.N.* II.11.649B and *D.N.* IV.13.712A-B.

## SECTION II

### DIVINE CAUSALITY

This section will consist of an examination of Pseudo-Dionysius' conception of divine causality as this is articulated in the *Divine Names*. The first part of this section will examine the threefold structure of causality: abiding, procession, and reversion. The second part considers our author's conception of the divine powers such as being itself, life itself, and so forth. This part contains an analysis of the nature of these powers in general. The third part will engage in a more detailed description of specific divine powers. Except for a consideration of divine be-ing ( $\delta\upsilon\nu$ ), I have selected for examination those divine powers which explicitly function to produce the analogical order of the totality of beings; to this end I shall consider Pseudo-Dionysius' conception of divine goodness, beauty, eros, power, justice, preservation, redemption and peace. In the final part of this section I shall offer a short discussion of the vertical and circular/spiral imagery which can be used to represent the divine cause.

#### A. *The Nature of Abiding, Procession and Reversion*

For Pseudo-Dionysius as for the Neoplatonists generally, the nature of causality is articulated in terms of the threefold structure of abiding ( $\mu\omicron\nu\eta$ ), procession ( $\pi\rho\omicron\delta\omicron\varsigma$ ), and reversion ( $\epsilon\pi\iota\sigma\tau\rho\omicron\phi\eta$ ). This is true both for the first cause and all other causes. Pseudo-Dionysius gives a striking expression of this threefold structure of divine causality in his celebration of the divine eros. For the divinity is eros

manifest of itself and through itself, a good procession of the separated unity, a simple self-moved, erotic motion—active of itself, before be-ing, in the good, flowing forth out of the good to beings, returning again into the good; in this the divine eros is excellently manifested to be without beginning and without end. The divine eros is like an everlasting circle—moving around in unerring convolution through the good, out of the good, in the good, into the good, always abiding, proceeding and returning in the same, and according to the same.<sup>1</sup>

Let me proceed to explicate Pseudo-Dionysius' understanding of

<sup>1</sup> D.N. IV.14.712C-713A.

causality.<sup>2</sup> Through causation, a cause lets be (gives being to) what it causes. In causality there is a genesis of what is other than the cause.<sup>3</sup> Before causing (apart from causing) there is only what causes; that is, what causes and what is caused are undifferentiated. (Of course, whether we are entitled to call what causes a "cause" apart from its causing is debatable.) After causing or in causation, there is what causes and what is caused.<sup>4</sup>

What is caused is something that is; but whatever is is one.<sup>5</sup> The be-ing of anything that is lies in achieving what pertains to its logos or nature. What is caused remains as it is so long as it participates in this logos. Moreover, the specific character of unity belonging to what is caused is derived from its cause(s). In order for what is caused to derive its character of unity from its cause, it must partake of its cause in some way; its cause must give itself to it.<sup>6</sup> Yet in this giving the cause remains undissipated; it does not become what it causes or change into it.<sup>7</sup> If a cause were to do this, there could be no causation nor could anything be caused. For if something that is caused is (has be-ing) only by participating in its cause, and if its cause were to be dissipated, then what is caused would cease to be. Thus what is caused can be only as long as its cause abides.

The genesis of what is caused from its causes is the procession of what is caused out of its causes. This procession is a multiplication or differentiation of the cause.<sup>8</sup> In proceeding out of its causes, what is caused is let be, both as distinct from the cause and as other than it. Or, more accurately, the cause proceeds out of itself and multiplies itself in what it causes;<sup>9</sup> that is, the cause is let be or manifests itself as other than itself.<sup>10</sup> Nonetheless, what causes abides apart from what it causes. For although it is wholly differenced in what it causes, it abides as the unity which it is. Moreover, what is caused abides in

<sup>2</sup> I shall make frequent footnote citations to Proclus' *Elements of Theology* (*El.Th.*) as Pseudo-Dionysius is influenced by Proclus and Proclus is sometimes clearer on certain matters than is Pseudo-Dionysius. See especially Hugo Koch, "Pseudo-Dionysius Areopagita in seinen Beziehungen zum Neoplatismus und Mysterienwesen," *Forschungen zur christlichen Literatur und Dogmengeschichte*. I Hefte 2-3 pp. 1-276.

<sup>3</sup> Proclus, *El.Th.* 27.

<sup>4</sup> Proclus, *El.Th.* 35.

<sup>5</sup> Proclus *El.Th.* 1. On being and unity in Pseudo-Dionysius see *D.N.* XIII. 2.977C-980A.

<sup>6</sup> *D.N.* II.11.649B..

<sup>7</sup> Proclus, *El.Th.* 28, 27; Pseudo-Dionysius, *D.N.* IX.4.912B, 9.916C.

<sup>8</sup> On *πολλαπλασιάζω* see Proclus *El.Th.* 27, 95, 152, 155; Pseudo-Dionysius *D.N.* II.5.644A, II.11.649B, V.8.824A, XI.1.949B.

<sup>9</sup> *D.N.* II.5.644A, IV.13.712A.

<sup>10</sup> *D.N.* IX.5.912D.

what causes it and, as such, is not other than it.

The cause is the source of completion and, indeed, is the completion of what it causes. In achieving its completion, what is caused attains to its good-being,<sup>11</sup> for the completion of a being is its goodness. Further, its completion consists in its partaking in its cause; thus, it is like its cause.<sup>12</sup> Indeed, the very be-ing of what is caused lies in its partaking in its cause. Its be-ing lies in imitating its cause as far as possible. All of this constitutes its tendency toward its reversion to its cause.<sup>13</sup>

The triadic structure of abiding, procession, and reversion is essential to every causation.<sup>14</sup> The procession of the divinity out of itself and its reversion into itself manifests the divinity as a hierarchy of beings. Each being in this order is determined by its logos; thus the hierarchy of beings is "analogically" ordered.<sup>15</sup> Further, those beings which are most like the divinity are brought forth "before" all others.<sup>16</sup> Since likeness can be understood in terms of unification and completion, the first among beings are those which are most unified and complete, while the last beings are the least unified and complete.<sup>17</sup>

I would note two fundamental features of this hierarchy. First, the totality of beings is manifested as an analogically ordered hierarchy of beings which is more or less like the divinity, which itself is like none of them.<sup>18</sup> Second, although the divinity is the ultimate cause of beings it is not the only cause; all beings act as causes so far as they can.<sup>19</sup>

Each being can be seen as occupying a definite place in the hierarchy of beings, as a cause of what proceeds from it, or as what participates in a cause.<sup>20</sup> Thus before be-ing, each being is "in" its cause as undifferentiated from it. To consider something according to cause is both to consider it as undifferentiated from its cause and to consider it as a prior anticipation of itself. However, to the extent that each being is a cause, each being is manifested in what it causes, such that this manifests by derivation what the cause already is in a primary way. To consider something according to participation is to consider it as

<sup>11</sup> See *D.N.* IV.20.717B-720B.

<sup>12</sup> Proclus, *El.Th.* 32; Pseudo-Dionysius, *D.N.* IX.6.913C.

<sup>13</sup> Proclus, *El.Th.* 32.

<sup>14</sup> See Proclus, *El.Th.* 35.

<sup>15</sup> *D.N.* IV.16.693B, 20.720A.

<sup>16</sup> See Proclus, *El.Th.* 28.

<sup>17</sup> For a description of the hierarchy of beings see *D.N.* IV.1.693C-2.696D.

<sup>18</sup> *D.N.* IX.6.913C.

<sup>19</sup> Thus as we will see in the next section, life itself is the cause of life for all that lives as such; living beings are manifestations of life itself and are living by participating in life itself. Also, the sun, in virtue of its weak likeness to the good, brings forth and preserves all sensible beings in being.

<sup>20</sup> Proclus, *El.Th.* 65.

being imitated by a participation of itself. Yet in all of this we do not consider a being for what it is; we do not consider it by itself at its own definite place in the hierarchy of beings. We do this when we consider it according to its constitution (*ὑπαρξίς*).<sup>21</sup>

When these considerations are extended over all beings, we see that there is not a plurality of worlds but one world which can be seen and known in different ways. Thus we can know all that is in the most unified and complete way, through contemplation of intelligible beings, or we can know things in the least unified and complete way through the sensation of sensible beings. For Pseudo-Dionysius, in all knowledge we always see and know the divinity, for the divinity is all in all.<sup>22</sup>

Each being is made manifest in what is brought forward from it, and is itself a manifestation of what has brought it forth.<sup>23</sup> At the same time each being is concealed and revealed in what it produces and conceals, and each reveals what brings it forth. For a cause is accessible only in reference to what it causes, and is comprehended only in reference to what it causes. What causes is manifest through be-ing in what it causes, while it abides hidden and apart from what it causes. That is, for causes which can be apart from what they cause, that which causes is wholly and entirely differenced, multiplied, and manifested in what it brings forth, while it abides wholly and entirely apart—and thus hidden—from what it causes.<sup>24</sup> Since what causes abides while causing, causality is the making manifest of what is hidden before and after—or, better *in*—causation.<sup>25</sup> Further, it is not merely the cause itself that remains hidden in opposition to what it causes, which is manifest. For

<sup>21</sup> The unity of the world is a function of the divine eros. For Pseudo-Dionysius one can distinguish these levels in the hierarchy of beings: 1) a given rank of equals, 2) those which are superior to these equals and which are both more fully be-ing than them and the cause of them, and 3) those which are inferior to the first group (the second as well); these are less fully be-ing than the first group and are caused by them. There is an ecstatic cosmic community of beings in which all beings are manifest and are manifested in all others. It is the divine eros which brings this about for "it is ecstatic; it does not permit lovers to remain among themselves but bids them to be among those whom they love. Superiors show this by coming to be among their inferiors through their providences; equals show this by their bond with one another: inferiors show this by returning to the more divine and first among beings" (D.N. IV.13.712A).

<sup>22</sup> D.N. I.7.596C, VII.3.872A, IX.5.912D. (For the repetition of this see D.N. IV.7.704C. αἱ πάντων ἐν πᾶσιν οἰκείως ἐκάστω κοινωναί.)

<sup>23</sup> See Proclus, *El.Th.*, 103.

<sup>24</sup> This is strictly true only for immaterial causes.

<sup>25</sup> Thus in speaking of the incarnation of Christ (*Letter* III.1070B) Pseudo-Dionysius says κρύβιος δὲ ἐστὶ καὶ μετὰ τὴν ἐκφασιν, ἥ ἵνα τὸ θεϊότερον εἴπω, καὶ ἐν τῇ ἐκφάνσει. (It is hidden after the manifestation or, to speak more divinely, in manifestation.)



what is caused is the manifestation of the cause itself; it is the cause manifesting itself. Moreover, that cause is the hiddenness (concealment) of what is caused; for what is caused always abides “in” the cause “as” undifferentiated from it.

For Pseudo-Dionysius the abiding (concealment) and procession and reversion (manifestation) which is the divinity is the divine unity and difference.

[The divine difference is] the good-showing processions of the godhead [divinity]. It is differenced in a unified way: being given to all beings, overflowing the participations of the totality of those that are good, singly made many, abidingly multiplied out of the one. Since God is beyond-beingly be-ing and, as being is given to beings and brings forth the totality of beings, that one be-ing is said to be multiplied by the bringing forth of all beings out of itself. By its beyond-beingly apartness from beings, its single bringing up of the whole, and the undiminished flowing of its undiminished gifts, it remains not less than itself, one in its manifoldness, unified in its procession, and full in its difference.<sup>26</sup>

The differencing of the divinity is the procession and reversion of all beings; in this differencing, beings are *as* beings. As such they are, subsist, and receive constitution; they are empowered and are given a position. It is both interesting and important to note here the connection between power and position, since for Pseudo-Dionysius, “that which universally has no power neither is, nor is something, nor is there any position of it at all.”<sup>27</sup> The fundamental principles of beings—being itself, life itself and so forth—are divine powers.<sup>28</sup> They are the first to subsist away from the divinity, and are that in terms of which all else that is subsists.<sup>29</sup> Moreover, these powers themselves—including even being itself—subsist in virtue of the divine power.<sup>30</sup> Through having power, all that is subsists. Thus to subsist is to be given a position; it

<sup>26</sup> D.N. II.11.649B. τὰς ἀγαθοπρεπεῖς τῆς θεαρχίας προόδους δωρουμένην, γὰρ πᾶσι τοῖς οὖσι, καὶ ὑπερχέουσα τὰς τῶν ὅλων ἀγαθῶν μετουσίας, ἡνωμένως μὲν διακρίνεται, πληθύνεται δὲ ἐνικῶς, καὶ πολλαπλασιάζεται ἐκ τοῦ ἑνὸς ἀνεκφοιτήτως οἶον, ἐπεὶ ὧν ἐστὶν ὁ θεὸς ὑπερουσιῶς δωρεῖται δὲ τὸ εἶναι τοῖς οὖσι, καὶ παράγει τὰς ὅλας οὐσίας, πολλαπλασιάζεσθαι λέγεται τὸ ἔν ὃν ἐκείνῳ τῇ ἐξ αὐτοῦ παραγωγῇ τῶν πολλῶν ὄντων, μένοντος δὲ οὐδεν ἡττον ἐκείνοι, καὶ ἐνὸς ἐν τῇ πληθυσμῷ, καὶ ἡνωμένον κατὰ τὴν πρόοδον, καὶ πλήρους ἐν τῇ διακρίσει, τῷ πάντων εἶναι τῶν ὄντων ὑπερουσιῶς ἐξηρημένον, καὶ τῇ ἐνιαίᾳ τῶν ὅλων προσαγωγῇ, καὶ τῇ ἀνελαττώτῃ χύσει τῶν ἀμειώτων αὐτοῦ μεταδόσει.

<sup>27</sup> D.N. VIII.5.893A. τὸ γὰρ καθόλου μηδεμίαν δύναμιν ἔχον οὔτε ἐστίν, οὔτε τί ἐστιν, οὔτε ἐστὶ τις αὐτοῦ παντελῶς θέσις.

<sup>28</sup> D.N. II.7.645A, 5.641D.

<sup>29</sup> D.N. V.5.820B-C.

<sup>30</sup> D.N. VIII.3.892B.

is to take up a place "away from" the divinity and to stand as different from and united to the divinity.

For Pseudo-Dionysius, the divinity is the position of all;<sup>31</sup> that is, it is the positioning (subsisting) of beings as beings, of beings be-ing. It is the differencing, multiplication, and limitation of unlimitedly, simply and beyond beingly be-ing in limited, diverse ways of be-ing. Further, this subsisting of beings is the ecstasis of the divinity out of itself. In this ecstasis the divinity "comes out of itself into beings"<sup>32</sup> and, thus, ex-ists. Yet this ec-stasis is the be-ing of beings; hence, the be-ing of beings: the divinity be-ing (existing). That is, the divinity both differentiates itself and is the differentiation of itself.

Yet the divinity abides. This does not mean that the divinity subsists beforehand or pre-exists—exists apart from beings—or *has* all beings *in* itself before causing them.<sup>33</sup> Rather, the abiding divinity: concealed before be-ing, before subsisting, and before having. Abiding, the divinity is not a being which subsists independently of or apart from beings; for the divinity is not a being at all. It is beings which subsist or exist or are positioned. The divinity, which is the positioning of all, is beyond all position.<sup>34</sup>

The divinity: wholly unity (abiding), wholly differenced (procession and reversion). Wholly abiding, "it neither was, nor will be, nor has come to be, nor is coming to be, nor will come to be, nor, indeed, is."<sup>35</sup> Yet, wholly differenced, it is "multiplied according to every conception of beings—was, is, will be, has come to be, is coming to be, and will come to be are all celebrated of it."<sup>36</sup>

### *B. The Divine Powers: A General Discussion*

All that is in any manner whatever—every being, life, wisdom, similarity and so forth—comes forth from out of the divinity; the divinity is the being, life and wisdom of all that is.<sup>37</sup> Yet, although it is the divinity that ultimately causes beings, and is that to which all explanation of beings must ultimately have recourse, it is still necessary to account for the specific characters of beings: their be-ing, life, intellect and so forth. For Pseudo-Dionysius it is "life itself that is the source of what lives as living; similarity itself, of those that are similar as simi-

<sup>31</sup> *D.N.* II.4.641A.

<sup>32</sup> *D.N.* IV.15.712B. *ἔξω ἑαυτοῦ γίνεται—εἰς τὰ ὄντα.*

<sup>33</sup> Nevertheless, for example, for syntactical reasons we are virtually forced to translate *προϋφαστήκεν* as "subsisting beforehand" or "pre-subsisting."

<sup>34</sup> *D.N.* II.4.641A; *M.T.* V.1048B.

<sup>35</sup> *D.N.* V. 4.817D.

<sup>36</sup> *D.N.* V. 8.824A.

<sup>37</sup> *D.N.* I.3.589B-C.

lar; unity itself of what is unified as unified, and order itself of what is ordered as ordered."<sup>38</sup> Life itself, similarity itself, and so forth are the divine powers.

Pseudo-Dionysius' discussion of the general nature of the divine powers is contained in *Divine Names* V.6,9, XI.6, and *Letter* II. Most of my discussion will center on *Divine Names* XI.6. Since this is an extremely dense section I shall, for convenience, provide the relevant passage of this section below.

How can I sometimes say that God is life itself and at other times say that God is the support of life itself . . . there is no contradiction in saying that God is power itself or life itself and that God is the support of life itself, or peace, or of power. For God is called the one in terms of beings, and especially the first among beings, as the cause of beings; God is called the other as being beyond-beingly beyond all, even the first beings.<sup>39</sup>

But, you ask, what in general do we call being itself or life itself, or all those which exist simply and primordially and which we regard as having been the first to subsist from out of God? We say that this is not oblique but that it has a simple and direct explanation. For we do not say that being itself, the cause of the *being* for all beings, is some divine or angelic being—for only being itself beyond being is source, being and cause of the *being* all beings—nor do we say that life-genesis is another divinity beyond the life beyond God, which is the cause of everything whatever that lives and of life itself. To speak summarily, we do not say that beings and subsistences are sources, principles, and creators of being.<sup>40</sup>

We maintain this: taken as source and taken divinely and causally, being itself, life itself, and the divinity itself are the one source and cause—beyond source and cause—of all. Taken in a participating way, we call these the providential powers which are given forth out of the unparticipated God: the giving itself of being, the giving itself of life, and the giving itself of deification. All beings participate in these in a manner appropriate to themselves, and they are and are said to be be-ing, living, and deified. Similar remarks apply to the others. Whence the good is the support of the first of these, then of the whole of these, then of the parts of these, then of those which participate in the whole of them, and then of those which participate partially in them.<sup>41</sup>

But what is to be said concerning this? For some of our divine instructors call the beyond good and beyond god the support of goodness itself and divinity itself: the good producing and god-giving gifts which have proceeded from God. Thus they

<sup>38</sup> *D.N.* V. 5.820B.

<sup>39</sup> *D.N.* XI.6.953B-C.

<sup>40</sup> *D.N.* XI.6.953C-D.

<sup>41</sup> *D.N.* XI.6.953D-956A.

call beauty itself the beauty producing flow, the whole beauty, the partial beauty, the wholly beautiful, and the partially beautiful, and all the other characters which are said or will be said in the same way. All of these show that the providences and goodnesses which are participated in by beings proceed and flow forth out of the unparticipated God in an ungrudging stream—precisely so that the cause of all would be beyond all, and the beyond being and beyond nature would be wholly beyond-having any beings and nature whatever.<sup>12</sup>

In general, the phrase αὐτό τὸ “x” (“x” itself) refers to whatever is said absolutely (ἀπαλότης) and primordially (ἀρχικότης). Further, what is denominated as such is viewed as having been the first to subsist away from the divinity.<sup>13</sup> Although being itself, life itself, and so forth are the sources of be-ing and life to all that are and live, they are not beings (οὐσίαι). Being itself is not a being; life itself is not a living thing, although it is a being since it participates in being itself. Consequently we cannot say that being itself is or that life itself lives except in the sense that “what pertains to what is caused is excellently and in a being-full way beforehand in its causes.”<sup>14</sup> I would also note that before subsisting “these” are “in” the divinity “as” the paradigms: “the being (οὐσία) producing logoi, subsisting beforehand uniformly in the divinity . . . [are] the predetermining and divine and good wills which are determinative and productive of beings, according to which that beyond being has predetermined and brought forth all beings.”<sup>15</sup>

The first problem I wish to examine in connection with the divine powers is the relation between these powers and the “support” (ὑποστάτης) of these powers. (Throughout my discussion I shall for the most part use individual powers as examples; moreover, I shall vary the choice of examples to remain in conformity with the various texts I shall be citing. However, what is said in this section about any one power applies to all powers.)<sup>16</sup> This problem is intimately connected

<sup>12</sup> D.N. XI. 6.956A-B.

<sup>13</sup> D.N. V.5.820B.

<sup>14</sup> D.N. II.8.645D.

<sup>15</sup> D.N. V.8.824C.

<sup>16</sup> There is no discussion as such of the relation of the various powers among themselves; there is only a brief mention of the hierarchical order which prevails between those powers (D.N. V.1.). The only exception to this is D.N. V.5 which articulates the priority of being itself over all other powers. Thus being itself is the first power to subsist away from the divinity and is prior to all other powers, for all of these must partake in it in order to be. Now it is only in connection with *being* (τὸ εἶναι) that Pseudo-Dionysius uses the phrase being itself in itself (αὐτὸ καθ' αὐτὸ τὸ εἶναι). Thus being itself in itself is contrasted with the *being* of life itself—or life itself *being*—(τὸ αὐτοζῶν εἶναι), and with the *being* of similarity itself (τὸ

with that of considering the divinity as wholly participated in by all beings and as wholly unparticipated. Further, the investigation of the meaning of "support" will be decisive in Section IV when I consider whether the divinity "is" beyond cause.

The fundamental *aporia* of *Divine Names* XI.6 is how we can "sometimes say that God is life itself and at other times say that God is the support of life itself." For Pseudo-Dionysius we can say both of these in respect of the divinity, for it is life itself "in reference to [living] beings, as especially in reference to the first among [living] beings—as the cause of living beings." The divinity is called support of life itself as "beyond being beyond-beingly beyond all, even the first among beings." Here the tension between life itself and support of life itself is the tension between cause and beyond being.

After preliminary clarification of how the divinity is to be called life itself and support of life itself, Pseudo-Dionysius gives two other classifications of the meaning of life itself and support of life itself. I shall review them now before proceeding to an analysis of them, for it does not seem to me that they are identical.

In the first classification we are given two senses of being itself and life itself. On the one hand, these can be taken "causally and divinely"; thus "they" are the "one source and cause—beyond source and cause—of all." On the other hand, these can be taken in a participating way; thus they are the "providential powers which flow forth out of the unparticipated godhead." As such, they are what beings participate in in order to be whatever they are. It is fairly clear that when "these" powers are taken causally they are the divine unity; when taken in a participating way they are the divine difference. For it is only the differentiation of the divinity in beings that makes it possible for beings to participate in the divinity. Indeed, the divine difference is the participation of beings in the divinity. On the other hand, the divine unity (the abiding divinity) is these powers taken causally; here, the divinity is unparticipated, for there is no difference between the divinity and beings. Given these two senses of life itself or being itself, "the good is said to be the support of the first of these, then of the whole of these, then of the parts of these, then of those which participate in the whole

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ἀπορομότητα εἶναι), and so forth. Since all the other powers proceed out of being itself, the *being* of life itself and the *being* of all other powers would be *being* itself in its procession and reversion; *being* itself in itself would be being itself "as" abiding. Since each power abides, processes, and reverts we would, for example, presumably speak of life itself in itself and the life of intellect. (We should note that Pseudo-Dionysius *never* refers to the abiding divinity by the phrase καθ' αὐτό).

of them, and then of those which participate partially in them." I shall develop the meaning of this phrase in the sequel.

In the second classification the coordination between x-itself and the support of x-itself is attributed to "some of our divine instructors." Here the beyond-good (*ὑπεράγαθον*) is support of goodness itself, where goodness itself is the good-producing gift which has proceeded out of the divinity. Thus "goodness itself—the good-producing flow—is the whole goodness, the partial goodness, the wholly good, and the partial good." This coordination between the beyond-good and goodness is the same as that given in Pseudo-Dionysius' second letter.<sup>17</sup>

It is unclear to me whether these two classifications of x-itself and the support of x-itself are identical; moreover, if they are, they seem to compromise an original distinction between x-itself and the support of x-itself. In the first classification we are given two senses in which, say, being itself is to be understood: first, the source and cause of all beyond every being and source (divine unity); second, the powers which come forth out of the divinity (the divine difference). Since the good is said to be support "of the first of these and then of those in totality, [etc.]," and since "of these in totality, . . ." refers to the powers which emerge out of the divinity, the support of being itself is support of being itself in both senses of being itself. The first classification between x-itself and the support of x-itself does not consider the divine unity to be the support of the divine difference, but it considers the good as the support of both the divine unity and divine difference. Since both senses of being itself mark it in its causality, this coordination we have just given would be in conformity with the original distinction between being itself (cause) and support of being itself (beyond being).

Further, we would expect the term "support" to mark the unparticipated divinity. This seems to be the intention of the second classification, and it is also intended by Proclus' use of the term.<sup>18</sup> Nonetheless, if the tension between being itself, taken causally, and being itself, taken in a participating way, is that between being itself as unparticipated and participated, and if I am right in regarding the support of being itself as the support of being itself in both senses of this term, then the term "support" points beyond the tension between unparticipated and participated.

Thus, in the second classification beauty itself (in keeping with the

<sup>17</sup> See my translation of *Letter II* in the "Appendix."

<sup>18</sup> For references to *ὑποστάτης* (or *ὑποστάτις*) in Proclus see, *El.Th.* 53, 57, 172, 194. The occurrences of these terms in Pseudo-Dionysius' writings are *D.N.* I.7.596C, V.4.817C, VII.2.868B, 868C, IX.1.909B, 8.916B, 10.917A, XI.2.949C, 6.953A, 953C, 956A.

example of the text) is the equivalent of beauty itself taken in a participating way in keeping with the first classification. For the giving of beauty is the making of beauty. Moreover, the beyond-beauty of the second classification is the equivalent of beauty itself taken in a causal way in keeping with the first classification. This is clear when we consider these two classifications with *Letter II*.<sup>49</sup> That is, given the obvious identity of what would be meant by "source of beauty" in *Letter II* with "beauty itself" in the second classification, we may easily identify the beyond-beauty of the second correlation with what would be intended by beyond-beauty in *Letter II*; namely, the source beyond every source. But this is precisely what beauty itself, taken causally, is according to the first correlation.

We must note the difference between the coordination in the second classification of beauty itself and the support of beauty itself, and the coordination of these in the first classification. Now in the second classification beauty itself is called "the whole beauty, the partial beauty, the wholly beautiful, and the partially beautiful." Thus the support of beauty itself in the second classification is support of the whole beauty, the partial beauty, and so forth. In the first classification, "the good is the support of the first of these, then of the whole of these," and so forth. Since the genitive αὐτῶν (these) refers to the divine powers, we can say in reference to beauty itself that the good is the support of the first of these, then of the whole of beauty itself, and so forth. Clearly, the phrase "the first of these" differentiates these two series. Assuming that the other phrases in the two series have the same relative meaning, then the phrase "the first of these" refers to beauty itself (and every other power) taken causally. The term "support," then, does not have the same reference in both classifications. For the support of beauty itself in the second classification—the beyond-beauty which is source beyond source of beauty—is the "first of those things" of which the good itself is the support in the first classification.

This apparently dual use of the word "support" points to a decisive ambiguity in the notion of cause. As we have seen, the threefold structure of causation is abiding, procession, and reversion. Something is causally related to what is other than it only in its procession and reversion, in which it lets that other be. For it is only in the procession from and reversion to what causes that the distinction between what causes and what is caused appears. Considered as abiding, there is no difference between what causes and what is caused. Thus "something" is a cause only insofar as it proceeds out of itself and is participated in by what it causes. Now if we regard something to be a cause or source

<sup>49</sup> See pp. 1068A-1069A in Migne, *P.G.* III.

in its procession and reversion, then that something as abiding and unparticipated would be beyond cause or source. However, the abiding of what causes is the source of its procession and reversion; thus, as abiding the something which causes is a source and cause (abiding) beyond source and cause (procession and reversion).

In the second classification of beauty itself and support of beauty itself, "support" marks the unparticipated abiding of the divinity: it marks the preeminence "of" (or, which is) the divinity. Nevertheless, a support is a support *of*; support may mark the divinity "as" unparticipated, abiding, and apart from beings, but it still marks the divinity in its relation to beings. It still marks the divinity in its causality. Yet the original distinction between being itself and support of being itself was that between cause and beyond be-ing (ὑπέρων); the first classification seems to follow this use. But what is now surprising is that "beyond be-ing" "describes" support. For this logia "beyond be-ing" is contrasted to cause and marks a most radical separation of the divinity from beings. Indeed, if we consider the contrast between cause and beyond be-ing in *Divine Names* V,<sup>50</sup> we see that the notion of cause includes the abiding preeminence of the divine cause. Hence "beyond be-ing" seems to deny all reference to beings of the divinity. Yet "support"—"support *of*"—does not absolve the divinity of all reference to beings. (This matter will be more fully considered in Section IV.)

The discussion so far of the distinction between the support of the divine powers and the powers themselves served to express the divine preeminence. The second task of this section is to examine the nature of the flowing forth of the divine providences or powers. Throughout this section I will use life itself as an example.

As source of the life of living beings *as living*, life itself is what is participated in by living beings in order to be living. As such life itself is the making (giving) of life (ζώωσις).<sup>51</sup> However, as we indicated earlier, life itself is not a living being.

Now life itself, the giving of life, is the whole life, the partial life, the totally living, and the partially living. What do these terms signify? In *Divine Names* V.5 being itself in itself (αὐτὸ καθ' αὐτὸ τὸ εἶναι) is identified with the being of the all (τὸ εἶναι πᾶν).<sup>52</sup> Since the all (πᾶν)

<sup>50</sup> D.N. V.8.824B. ἀλλὰ πάντα ἔστιν, ὡς πάντων αἴτιος, καὶ ἐν αὐτῷ πάσας ἀρχὰς, πάντα συμπεράσματα, πάντων τῶν ὄντων συνέχων καὶ προέχων καὶ ὑπὲρ τὰ πάντα ἔστιν ὡς πρὸ πάντων ὑπερουσίως ὑπερών. It is cause of all—co-having and before-having in itself all the sources and ends of beings—but beyond all: beyond be-ing beyond-beingly before all.

<sup>51</sup> The suffix -ωσις means giving or making. This suffix is used by Pseudo-Dionysius to characterize all the divine powers. Thus αὐτὸ τὸ εἶναι is ἡ οὐσίωσις.

<sup>52</sup> D.N. V.5.820C.



and the whole (ὅλον) seem to mean the same for Pseudo-Dionysius (although he uses the word *πάν* much more frequently than *ὅλον*), the identification of being itself in itself with the being of the all (whole) would suggest that life itself is the life of the whole, or the totality of what lives. If this is so, then the partial life is the life of this or that living being; the wholly living is the totality of living beings; and the partially living is this or that living being.

A living being is what participates in life; its life is its participation in life itself.<sup>53</sup> Hence the life of a particular living being—its liv-ing—is its participation in life itself. Now life itself, which is participated in by all living beings, is the giving or making of living beings. However, life itself, whether as such or as the life of an individual living being, is not itself a living being. It does not have life; it does not itself live. Rather, it lets living beings live; it is the liv-ing (letting live) of living beings. Life itself “lives” all that lives.

It is the divinity itself that lets living beings live; for life itself, the liv-ing of what lives, is the procession of the divine source of life into what lives. The totality of living beings is the multiplication and manifestation of the divine life; the divine life manifests itself in the totality of living beings. The life of each living being—its liv-ing—is the presence of life itself in the living being; this liv-ing is a participation in life itself. That is, life itself (the differentiation of the divine life) shows itself in living beings as a participation of itself. In liv-ing what lives, the divinity manifests itself in and as what lives.<sup>54</sup>

The discussion so far has shown that for Pseudo-Dionysius, the divinity wholly presences itself in letting beings be; yet it “is” wholly apart and hidden from beings. The divinity is the being and life of all beings, yet [is] beyond all being and life. Pseudo-Dionysius constantly celebrates the total presencing and separation which is the divinity; this celebration is magnificently illustrated in four separate texts from the *Divine Names*.

It is cause, source, being, and life of all beings . . . a source of completion to those being completed, a source of deification to those being deified, simplification for those being simplified, unity of those being unified, beyond-beingly beyond source of every being . . . and, in a word, it is the life of what lives, the being of beings, and source and cause of every being and life; through its goodness it brings forth and conserves beings in being.<sup>55</sup>

<sup>53</sup> I am generalizing the distinction between what is beautiful (τὸ κάλον) and beauty (ὁ κάλλος) which Pseudo-Dionysius gives at *D.N.* 7.702C.

<sup>54</sup> Similar remarks apply to all the other divine powers.

<sup>55</sup> *D.N.* I.3.590B-C.

But if the good is beyond all beings, as indeed it is, and the formless is productive of form, then in it alone is non-being thrust beyond being, non-life beyond having all life, non-intellect beyond having wisdom.<sup>56</sup>

The cause and fullness of all . . . is a completion to the non-complete as source of completion and non-complete in the complete as beyond completion and before completion; form producing form in those without form as source of form and non-form in those which are formed as beyond form; it is being undefiedly taking a stand upon the totality of beings, yet beyond being as apart from all being . . . <sup>57</sup>

This good working eros of beings—before be-ing, thrust beyond into the good—does not permit it to abide sterile in itself but has moved it toward a fitness for doing in the generative thrusting-forth of all beings.<sup>58</sup>

For Pseudo-Dionysius the divinity is beyond being (*ὑπερουσίος*); he understands “beyond being” in terms of non be-ing (*μὴ ὄν*).<sup>59</sup> However, the divine non be-ing is not be-ing in no manner whatever (*μηδαμῇ μηδαμῶς ὄν*)<sup>60</sup>, but “is” beyond-beingly be-ing (*ὢν ὑπερουσίως*). Beyond beingly be-ing—be-ing simply and unlimitedly—is not empty but overfull or beyond-full (*ὑπερπλήρης*). Now the divinity, abiding undiminished, empties itself to fill all beings be-ing.<sup>61</sup> Thus it is beings that are full, or better—it is beings that are filled; it is only what can attain to its limits that can be full. The overfull and unlimitedly divinity: beyond what is full.

For Pseudo-Dionysius the divine overfull beyond-being is *ὑπερβολὴ τῆς οὐσίας*.<sup>62</sup> The standard translation of this phrase is “excess of being.” Yet this translation is misleading insofar as it suggests that the divinity is excessively full of being; for this implies that it is a being (which is an “infinite ocean of substance”)! Rather *ὑπερβολὴ τῆς οὐσίας* should be understood as “thrust beyond being.” Yet the divine non be-ing which “is” thrust beyond being is not a being beyond being (*οὐσία ὑπερούσιος*), where this means that the divinity is a “this something” (*τόδε τι*) which

<sup>56</sup> D.N. IV.3.697A. *εἰ δὲ καὶ ὑπὲρ πάντα τὰ ὄντα ἔστιν (ὥσπερ οὖν ἐστὶ) τάγαθον, καὶ τὸ ἀνείδον εἰδοποιεῖ, καὶ ἐν αὐτῷ μονῶ καὶ τὸ ἀνοΐσιον οὐσίας ὑπερβολή, καὶ τὸ ἀζῶον ὑπερέχουσα ζωή, καὶ τὸ ἀνουν ὑπερέχουσα σοφία, καὶ ὅσα ἐν τάγαθῷ τῆς τῶν ἀνείδεων ἐστὶν ὑπεροχικῆς εἰδοποιίας.*

<sup>57</sup> D.N. II.10.648C

<sup>58</sup> D.N. IV.10.708B. *αὐτὸς γὰρ ὁ ἀγαθοεργὸς τῶν ὄντων ἔρως, ἐν τάγαθῷ καθ' ὑπερβολὴν προϋπάρχων, οὐκ εἴασεν αὐτὸν ἀγονοῦ ἐν ἑαυτῷ μένειν, ἐκίνησε δὲ αὐτὸν εἰς τὸ πρακτικεύεσθαι κατὰ τὴν ἀπάντων γενητικὴν ὑπερβολὴν.*

<sup>59</sup> See especially, D.N. IV.3.697A, 18.716A, 19.716C-D.

<sup>60</sup> D.N. IX.4.912C.

<sup>61</sup> D.N. II.11.649B.

<sup>62</sup> D.N. IV.3.697A.

subsists in itself (καθ' αὐτό) apart from other beings. Pseudo-Dionysius does refer to the divinity as being beyond being,<sup>63</sup> but he understands this phrase in this fashion: "it is being (οὐσία) undefiledly taking a stand upon the totality of beings, but beyond being (ὑπερουσίος) as apart from all being."<sup>64</sup>

To translate ὑπερβολή as "thrust beyond" suggests that we understand it in terms of ὑπέρκειμαι (to lie beyond)<sup>65</sup> and ὑπεριδρύω (to be established beyond);<sup>66</sup> indeed, these are common verbs which Pseudo-Dionysius applies to the divinity. Thus it lies beyond all and is established beyond all. Yet is this formulation really satisfactory? For it is beings which are established and which are "laid down"—which are given a position. The divinity which positions all; beyond position. Hence a more radical (negative) interpretation of these verbs is "beyond what is laid down" and "beyond what is established." The beyond-full beyond being: beyond all that is established and laid down.

Yet the divinity does not "remain sterile in itself but is moved toward a fitness for production." This production of beings be-ing is the thrusting forth (ὑπερβολή) of all beings out of the divinity into be-ing, and encompasses the divine procession and reversion which is beings be-ing. Wholly and entirely thrust beyond all beings be-ing, the overfull beyond-being comes out of itself in thrusting forth itself and all beings into be-ing. Thus ὑπερβολή is fundamentally ambiguous.

### C. *The Divine Powers: An Analysis of Selected Divine Names*

Having completed a general analysis of the divine powers let me now proceed to examine the nature and function of specific divine powers and names. I will consider the names of goodness, beauty, eros, be-ing, power, justice, preservation, and peace, for in my estimation these are the most important powers with which Pseudo-Dionysius deals. Again I must emphasize that this entire discussion refers to the manifestation of the divinity in beings,

for what is divine and everything which is manifested to us are known by their participations alone. But these—whatever they are in their proper source and foundation—are beyond intellect and beyond all being and knowledge. Thus, if we would name the hiddenness beyond being either "god" or "being" or

<sup>63</sup> D.N. I.1.588B, V.1.816B.

<sup>64</sup> D.N. II.10.648D, see note 57 for the Greek.

<sup>65</sup> For some occurrences of this verb see D.N. I.1.588B, II.5.644A, 6.644C.

<sup>66</sup> For some occurrences of this verb see D.N. II.8.645C, VII.1.865B, IX.8.916B, XII.4.972B.

"life" or "light" or "logos," we would understand nothing other than powers which are brought forward out of it into us.<sup>67</sup>

### 1. Good, Beauty, and Eros

In Neoplatonic thought "good" and "one" are identical, thus to be good is to be one. However, good and one are prior to being (*οὐσία*), for being always marks multiplicity, and the good (the one) is, ultimately, the absence of all multiplicity. Further, being always points towards completion (*τέλος*). This means that something is only to the extent that it attains to the unity which is proper to its logos or nature. In attaining to this unity a being attains to its completion. This is its end or good.<sup>68</sup>

For Pseudo-Dionysius goodness names the entire divine constitution because "by *being* the good as 'essential' good extends goodness to all beings."<sup>69</sup> We thus see a decisive connection between constitution and goodness and cause; for it is as constitution of goodness that the divinity is cause of all. Indeed, as we have just seen, the divine constitution itself is goodness. "Constitution" here seems to have both the sense of "existence" (*ecstasis*) and the sense of source. For the procession of all beings into be-ing—the divine goodness—is the *ecstasis* of the divinity; however, as source of this procession, the divinity is "constitution beyond being."<sup>70</sup>

Pseudo-Dionysius constantly explicates the emergence of beings out of the good by means of an analogy with the sun's productivity.<sup>71</sup> Indeed, the sun is called the weak and obscure image of the good, which is its transcendent "archetype." However useful this analogy might be for understanding the divine causality, it suffers from a fatal defect

<sup>67</sup> D.N. II.7.645A. πάντα γὰρ τὰ θεία, καὶ ὅσα ἡμῖν ἐκπέφανται ταῖς μετοχαῖς μόνοις γινώσκεται, αὐτὰ δὲ ὅποια ποτέ ἐστι κατὰ τὴν οἰκείαν ἀρχὴν καὶ ἰδρυσιν ὑπὲρ νοῦν ἐστι καὶ πᾶσαν οὐσίαν καὶ γνῶσιν. οἶον, εἰ τὴν ὑπερούσιον κρυφιώτητα θεόν, ἢ ζῶην, ἢ οὐσίαν, ἢ φῶς, ἢ λόγον ὀνομάσαιμεν, οὐδὲν ἕτερον νοοῦμεν ἢ τὰς εἰς ἡμᾶς ἐξ αὐτῆς προαγομένας δυνάμεις.

<sup>68</sup> Proclus, *El.Th.* 13.

<sup>69</sup> D.N. IV.1.693B. The word "essential" translates οὐσιώδες. This term can also be translated as "being-full."

<sup>70</sup> D.N. II.4.641A. ἡ ὑπερούσιος ὑπαρξίς. I would also note: the production of all beings from out of the good takes place αὐτῷ τῷ εἶναι by its *being* or αὐτῷ ὑπαρξεί by its constitution. Like the sun the good is not ὁ λογιζόμενος (what reasons) or ὁ προαιρουμένος (what chooses). Hence it is evident that Pseudo-Dionysius' conception of the production of all beings is not a theory of creation, at least if such a theory implies an activity of divine willing or choice in the production of beings. This perhaps accounts for his cursory treatment of divine intellect in D.N. VII; for it is assigned no significant role in the production of beings.

<sup>71</sup> D.N. IV.1.693B-C, 4.697B-700C, V.8.824B-C.

which is implicit in any example drawn from material beings. Thus, although the sun illuminates all those things which are capable of participating in its light, according to their capacity to receive light, "if anything does not participate in its rays, this is not due to the inertness or deficiency of its distribution of light but is due to the inaptitude for light reception of the things which do not unfold themselves for the participation of light."<sup>72</sup> The sun illuminates things according to their capacity but is not responsible for (the cause of) the incapacity of any particular being to receive light. For apart from the sun subsists a matter which receives its light and which is given to the sun, but which is not produced by the sun and is not from out of the sun.

This is not the sort of relation which pertains between beings and the good. For all that pertains to beings is from out of the good, and this must include the capacity of a being to receive goodness. Beings do not somehow exist before be-ing; before be-ing; the good (divinity) alone. The good does not operate on some already existing powers or "other" which is given to the good and which is not from out of the good. Or, if we wish to maintain that there must always and already be an other which is given to the good, then we must say that the good is always and already that other. (As we will see later, this consideration is of critical importance in the problem of evil.)

For Pseudo-Dionysius the good and the beautiful are the same;<sup>73</sup> indeed, the divinity is both beauty and beautiful. The divinity is beauty "on account of the beauty communicated from itself to all beings in a manner appropriate to each."<sup>74</sup> Since every being participates in the divine beauty in some way, the divine beauty is communicated to all beings. The divinity is beautiful as all-beautiful and beyond what is beautiful; as such, it is "always and uniformly beautiful in itself and with itself."<sup>75</sup> For Pseudo-Dionysius "beauty" and "beautiful" are not to be distinguished in the divinity;<sup>76</sup> the divinity itself is prior to the differentiation of beauty (participation in beauty itself) and what is beautiful (what participates in beauty itself) which emerges in beings.

The divine beauty is the giving of all beauty to all beings. This giving of beauty is a gathering of beings into beauty or into the unity and

<sup>72</sup> *D.N.* IV.4.697D.

<sup>73</sup> *D.N.* IV.7.704A. We must not understand the good or the beautiful in terms of one type of cause—say either final or formal. For the good/beautiful is the "from out of which," the "in which," and the "for the sake of which" or "into which" of all beings (*D.N.* IV.4.700B, 7.704A).

<sup>74</sup> *D.N.* IV.7.701C.

<sup>75</sup> *D.N.* IV.7.707A. Pseudo-Dionysius' description of the beautiful at *D.N.* IV.7.701D-704A is taken from Plato, *Symp.* 211A/B.

<sup>76</sup> *D.N.* IV.7.701C.

order which is appropriate to them.<sup>77</sup> Beauty points decisively to a gathering and calling of beings into be-ing, or what is the same, a calling and gathering of being to the divinity. For our author, the "divinity is called beauty (*κάλλος*) on account of calling (*καλοῦν*) all beings to itself."<sup>78</sup>

This gathering of beings into be-ing is the procession and reversion which is beings be-ing; in this beings are established as beings.<sup>79</sup> The reversion of beings into the divinity is to be understood as a circling about the divinity. I will explore the meaning of this circular imagery later; for now I wish to examine one misconception of this imagery which leads to a serious misunderstanding of the ecstatic or erotic character of the divine goodness and beauty.

If we conceive the reversion of beings into the divinity to be a circling of beings about the divinity, we are tempted to imagine the different orders of beings arranged into concentric circles about a common center, so that each being attains to its *being* when it finds the circle appropriate to it and remains there as long as is possible for it. Now if each being is only to the extent that it attains its place in the hierarchy of beings and does not depart from it, one is tempted to think of these circles as distinct from and independent of one another. This, however, tends to equate the attainment of completion or goodness with self-sufficiency or independence from all other beings; that is, it suggests that to be complete is to find one's place in the hierarchy of beings, so that one has as little as possible to do with anything else. The obvious ethical implication of this is that human happiness lies solely in individual happiness.

Such a position is clearly antithetical to Pseudo-Dionysius' thought, for it obliterates the ecstatic character of be-ing which constitutes eros. For our author, "the divine eros is ecstatic; it does not permit any to be lovers of themselves but of those which they love."<sup>80</sup> The divine eros both thrusts the divinity forth out of itself and into beings and thrusts all beings out of themselves and into the beings which are about them—although the divinity and beings abide insofar as each is able. Since all beings are in all beings no being is apart from all beings nor can it be understood apart from all beings. Indeed not even the divinity is apart from all. Not even the divinity can properly be known apart

<sup>77</sup> D.N. IV.7.701C.

<sup>78</sup> D.N. IV.7.701C. See Plato, *Crat.* 418C for the source of this "etymology."

<sup>79</sup> Put another way, abiding; beyond beingly be-ing; in procession and reversion: the emergence of beingly be-ing (*οὐσίως ὄν*). Pseudo-Dionysius never expresses procession in quite this way. However, since *οὐσία* applies only to beings this manner of expression does not seem inappropriate.

<sup>80</sup> D.N. IV.13.712A.

from all; for apart from all nothing: a darkness of unknowing. The radical and complete ecstasis of the divinity is beautifully celebrated in the following text:

We must dare to say this beyond truth: the cause of all beings—by the beautiful and good eros of all and through the thrusting forth of erotic goodness—comes to be outside itself and into all beings through its providences and is, as it were, charmed by goodness, eros, and *agapé*. In an ecstatic power beyond being, it is brought down from out of a separation from all, and beyond all, to what is in all yet does not wander out of itself.<sup>81</sup>

This study of Pseudo-Dionysius' conception of divine causality began by citing a text which articulated the nature of the divine eros. This entire section has been occupied in one way or another with unfolding the meaning of that text, for the divine causality is fundamentally erotic and ecstatic. Thus I shall not now engage in a specific analysis of the divine eros. Rather, I wish to consider briefly what for Pseudo-Dionysius constitutes the preeminent ecstasis of the divinity—the incarnation of Christ—and to pose a question regarding the fundamental character of the divine ecstasis.

In one passage Pseudo-Dionysius attributes to Hierotheus,<sup>82</sup> his mentor, the view that the cause of all is named "the divinity of Jesus." As we have seen, this cause is differentiated in all beings in its ecstasis. The most radical and complete ecstasis of this cause is the incarnation of Christ, for

in this case Jesus is not said to be man (only) as cause of man but as truly a whole man according to being . . . The beyond being is given being according to men, and from out of the being of men. Without a doubt, in the abundance of this (taking on of being) the overfull and always-beyond-being is nonetheless beyond beingness.<sup>83</sup>

We may contrast this text with the following text, which pertains to the production of all beings from out of the divinity.

<sup>81</sup> D.N. IV.13.712A-B. τολμητέον δὲ καὶ τοῦτο ὑπὲρ ἀληθείας εἰπεῖν. ὅτι καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ πάντων αἰτίας, τῷ καλῷ καὶ ἀγαθῷ τῶν πάντων ἔρωτι, δι' ὑπερβολὴν τῆς ἐρωτικῆς ἀγαθοτήτος ἐξῆ ἑαυτοῦ γίνεται, ταῖς εἰς τὰ ὄντα πάντα προνοίαις, καὶ οἷον ἀγαθότητι καὶ ἀγαπήσει καὶ ἐρωτι θέλγεται, καὶ ἐκ τοῦ ὑπὲρ πάντα καὶ ἐξηρημένον πρὸς τὸ ἐν πᾶσι κατὰγεται, καὶ ἐκστατικὴν ὑπεροῦσιον δύναμιν ἀνεκφοίτητον ἑαυτοῦ.

<sup>82</sup> D.N. II.10.648C-649A.

<sup>83</sup> Letter IV.1072A. οὐ γὰρ ὡς αἶτος ἀνθρώπων ἐνθάδε λέγεται ἄνθρωπος, ἀλλ' ὡς αὐτὸς κατ' οὐσίαν ὅλην ἀληθῶς ἄνθρωπος ὢν . . . κατὰ ἀνθρώπους ἐκ τῆς τῶν ἀνθρώπων οὐσίας ὁ ὑπεροῦσιος οὐσιωμένος. ἔστι δὲ οὐδὲν ἡττον ὑπεροσιότητος ὑπερπλήρης ὁ αἰὲ ὑπεροῦσιος ἀμέλει τῇ ταύτης περιουσίᾳ.

It is differenced in a unified way; singly made many, abidingly multiplied out of the one . . . it remains not less than itself, one in its manifoldness, unified in its procession, full in its difference.<sup>84</sup>

In the incarnation of Christ, the divinity takes on being or is given being (οὐσιωμένος or οὐσιώθη). It is extremely important to note the use of the passive mood of οὐσιώω (to give being or to invest with being), for Pseudo-Dionysius applies this passive mood *exclusively* to the incarnation of Christ.<sup>85</sup> Although the verb οὐσιώω is used in the active sense only once by Pseudo-Dionysius, it can articulate the procession and reversion of beings into being, the procession and reversion of the divinity out of itself.<sup>86</sup> For in this procession and reversion, the divinity brings forth all beings into being, "leads the all into being,"<sup>87</sup> and thus gives them being. Thus beings take on being and are given being. We can legitimately regard all beings as οἱ οὐσιωμένοι (the ones which take on being).

Yet is it only in the God-man Christ that the divinity takes on being? Is only the God-man Christ an incarnation of the divinity in which it takes on being? For the procession and reversion of all beings is the procession and reversion of the divinity out of itself and about itself; in its procession and reversion the divinity itself stands out of itself. Moreover, this divine ecstasis does not produce beings by operating on what is given to it but is not from out of it; this is because all that in any way is, is from out of the divinity. But, then, does not the divinity itself take on being in its ecstasis? Are not beings an "incarnation" of the divinity?

This concludes my discussion of good, beauty, and eros; however, before considering the divine name of be-ing I wish to delineate the various senses in which Pseudo-Dionysius employs the term "non be-ing." This digression is appropriate here, for it is precisely the extension of good (beauty) to non be-ing that establishes the priority of good (beauty) over be-ing.<sup>88</sup> No problem is more decisive, yet handled in a more frustrating manner for the reader of the *Corpus Dionysianum* than that of non be-ing, for we are never given any systematic dis-

<sup>84</sup> D.N. II.11.649B. ἡνωμένως μὲν διακρίνεται, πληθύνεται δὲ ἐνικῶς, πολλαπλασιάζεται ἐκ τοῦ ἑνὸς ἀνεκφωιτήτως . . . μένοντος δὲ οὐδὲν ἥττον ἐκείνου, καὶ ἐνὸς ἐν τῷ πληθυνσαμῷ καὶ ἡνωμένου κατὰ τὴν προόδον, καὶ πλήρους ἐν τῇ διακρίσει.

<sup>85</sup> D.N. II.6.644C, 9.648B, 10.648C; M.T. III.1033A; Letter III.1069B; Letter IV.1072B.

<sup>86</sup> D.N. IV.20.721A.

<sup>87</sup> D.N. IX.9.916C.

<sup>88</sup> D.N. V.1.816B.



cusion of the various senses that this phrase has. Nevertheless, I find five different senses.

First, non be-ing: be-ing in no manner whatever (*μηδαμὴ μηδαμῶς ὄν*).<sup>89</sup> This phrase "marks" evil itself; it serves to deny that evil itself is a being or is in *being*, or is in any way a principle or cause of beings. Evil itself: nothing at all.<sup>90</sup> Nonetheless, some beings are evil and can become evil. This occurs when beings fail to be according to their nature. This failure to be which constitutes the evil "in" beings is the second sense of non be-ing. It is not to be understood simply in terms of negativity (as this is expressed by the α-privative), but in terms of contradiction or contrariness (as this is expressed through *παρά*).<sup>91</sup>

The third sense of non be-ing seems to apply to what comes to be (*τὸ γιγνόμενον*) in contrast to what always is (*τὸ ἀεὶ ὄν* or *τὸ ὄντως ὄν*),<sup>92</sup> since for Pseudo-Dionysius what comes to be is in some way be-ing and in some way non be-ing. This contrast between what really is and what somehow is, is of course, a Platonic way of distinguishing intelligible beings from sensible beings.

The fourth sense of non be-ing applies to the divinity itself; the divinity: beyond beingly be-ing.<sup>93</sup> This phrase serves especially to mark the abiding divine cause; for this is not a being but before all beings. The fifth and most radical sense of non be-ing denies beyond beingly be-ing and, thus, ultimately denies causality; the divinity: beyond be-ing beyond-beingly before all.<sup>94</sup>

## 2. *Be-ing*

Let me continue with my discussion of the divine names and discuss the name of be-ing which is celebrated in *Divine Names* V. The task in this chapter is to celebrate the "being producing procession of the thearchic source of being into all beings."<sup>95</sup> Pseudo-Dionysius calls this source of being "the before be-ing" (*ὁ πρόον*). My task is to explicate the meaning of the before-be-ing and to examine more closely the connection between be-ing and causality.

Now, it is beings which are. This means that beings participate in

<sup>89</sup> *D.N.* IV.32.732D.

<sup>90</sup> For Pseudo-Dionysius' discussion of evil see *D.N.* IV.18-34; esp. *D.N.* IV.19-20 for the initial discussion of evil. Also, see Section 3 of this Introduction.

<sup>91</sup> See *D.N.* IV.32. In Section III, I will develop this sense of non be-ing as *parasence*.

<sup>92</sup> *D.N.* IV.20.720D-721A; *M.T.* I.1.997B.

<sup>93</sup> *D.N.* II.11.649B.

<sup>94</sup> *D.N.* V.8.824B. I will develop this in Section IV.

<sup>95</sup> *D.N.* V.1.816B. *τὴν οὐσιοποιὸν εἰς τὰ ὄντα πάντα τῆς θεαρχικῆς οὐσιαρχίας πρὸσδον*.

be-ing. Further, beings participate in be-ing only in the procession and reversion of the be-ing of all beings. The be-ing of all beings is not itself a being. Abiding, the be-ing of beings: before be-ing, and simply and unlimitedly be-ing. As such it "neither was, nor will be, nor is come to be, nor is coming to be, nor will come to be, nor, indeed, is not."<sup>96</sup> Yet the be-ing of beings is all beings. That is, the before be-ing in its procession and reversion is "multiplied according to every conception of be-ing . . . thus 'has come to be,' 'is coming to be,' 'will come to be,' 'was,' 'is,' and 'will be' are celebrated of it."<sup>97</sup>

The before be-ing "is all as cause of all."<sup>98</sup> Here "is" means "causes." Thus the before be-ing causes all. In causing all, it gives be-ing, life, wisdom, and all the other characters which pertain to beings. The before be-ing is-es all. The before be-ing: the "is-ing" of beings which lets beings be as beings. In this is-ing the simply and unlimitedly be-ing is multiplied and limited; the "is-ing" of beings: an "as-ing" of beings. These locutions "is-ing" and "as-ing" are not employed to be bizarre. They serve rather to emphasize that the be-ing (letting be) of all beings is a giving, empowering, and limiting of divine be-ing, which letting be: divine be-ing.

We have symbolized the letting be of beings as an "is-ing," for the before be-ing "is all as cause of all." Yet even "is-ing" remains fundamentally inadequate to symbolize the letting-be of beings. "Is" can be contrasted with "are"; the divinity is; beings are. This seems to express the unity of the divinity in contrast with the multiplicity of beings.<sup>99</sup> Further, if we understand "is" in a Platonic or Plotinian fashion—that is, as eternal be-ing (be-ing all at once)—then "are" designates sensible beings which only were and will be, and then the tension between "is" and "are" is the tension between eternity and time. Yet each of these contrasts the divine unity with the multiplicity of beings and considers the divine be-ing to be one mode of be-ing (is) contrasted with all others (are). Yet for Pseudo-Dionysius, although divine be-ing "is" every eternity and time, "it is before and beyond every eternity and time."<sup>100</sup> Moreover,

be-ing one, it has bestowed unity to every part and whole, and every unity and multitude. Thus in the same way beyond-beingly one, it is not a part of a multitude, not a whole of parts; it is not

<sup>96</sup> *D.N.* V.4.817D. See Section III, fn. 35 for the Greek.

<sup>97</sup> *D.N.* V.8.824A. See Section III, fn. 36 for the Greek.

<sup>98</sup> *D.N.* V.8.824B.

<sup>99</sup> "It is" and "they are" also express the tension between an individual being and many beings; this is not relevant to our present consideration.

<sup>100</sup> *D.N.* II.10.648C, X.2.937B, 3.940A.

one, does not partake in one, and does not have the one.<sup>101</sup>

Both "(it) is," "(I) am," and "(they) are" are encompassed by and must yield to the priority of be-ing: neither one nor many, neither eternity nor time, yet every one and many, and every eternity and time.<sup>102</sup>

### 3. Power, Justice, Preservation, Redemption, and Peace

The nature (φύσις) or the logos of a being is what determines the being to be what it is. Further, each nature is a determination of and manifestation of the divinity itself. Now all the natures of beings are interconnected into a universal nature, such that there is no opposition between any one nature and nature as a whole. However, the diversity of natures is such that not every nature or what pertains to any one nature is compatible with every other nature.<sup>103</sup> Thus, not everything that pertains to the nature of a human being pertains to or is compatible with the nature of a rock; not everything that pertains to the nature of a monk pertains to or is compatible with the nature of a priest. Now order can prevail with beings and their natures only if they are brought together and differentiated in a way which is in conformity with each other and with each nature. The cause of this order or appropriate identity and difference between all beings is the divinity. We should note that even if the totality of nature be considered to be eternally subsisting and always ordered, it is not the cause of its own order, for it is not the source of its own unity. For Pseudo-Dionysius power, justice, preservation, redemption, and peace play a decisive role in letting beings be ordered.

The notion of power is critical in the thought of Pseudo-Dionysius and of the Neoplatonists generally. Thus, for Pseudo-Dionysius the intelligible names which are given by us to the divinity are understood to refer to its powers. These powers manifest and make known the hidden divinity beyond being. Power then has reference to what is be-ing and what is known; the divinity itself as beyond all be-ing and thinking is "apart from and preeminent to every power, however be-ing and conceived."<sup>104</sup> Thus, the question which Pseudo-Dionysius raises

<sup>101</sup> D.N. II.11.649D. ἐν ὧν, καὶ παντὶ μερεῖ καὶ ὅλῳ καὶ ἐνὶ καὶ πλήθει, τοῦ ἐνὸς μεταδούς, ἐν ἑστίν ὡσαύτως ὑπερουσίως, οὔτε μέρος ὃν τοῦ πλήθους, οὔτε ἐκ μερῶν, ὅλον, καὶ οὕτως οὔτε ἐν ἑστίν, οὔτε ἐνὸς μετέχει, οὔτε τὸ ἐν ἔχει.

<sup>102</sup> See D.N. I.6.596A where "I am who am" (ἐγὼ εἰμι ὃ ὦν [Exod. 3.14]) is said to be one of the *many names* of the divinity. Hence, in the same vein, divine be-ing is to be expressed "infinitively" or "gerundally." This expression is prior to yet encompasses every distinction (always finite) between "number," "person," "tense," and "mood."

<sup>103</sup> D.N. IV.26.728C.

<sup>104</sup> D.N. VIII.1.889C.

is, how is the divinity which is beyond all power to be given the name of power?<sup>105</sup> We find the answer to this question by considering the threefold structure of causality. Hence power as we have so far described it, has reference to the procession and reversion of the divinity, in which power is given to all that is. Yet the divinity, abiding, is source of all power. As such it is power as "before-having (anticipating) and beyond-having every power in itself."<sup>106</sup>

Abiding, the divinity is the source of power. In its procession and reversion it distributes power to all that is; indeed it is the distribution of power to all that is. "The distribution of the unlimited power of God proceeds into all beings and there is no being which is completely apart from having some power."<sup>107</sup>

As we saw earlier, the divine power subsists and positions all beings. It is positioning (subsisting) of beings as beings. Thus it is the differencing and multiplication of unlimitedly beyond beingly be-ing in limited ways of be-ing. As such it founds both the nature of all beings and beings themselves. Now the differencing of the divinity in beings makes explicit the totality of beings as a unified and differentiated totality which is hierarchically ordered. This order can subsist only so long as the appropriate relations between beings are preserved. Thus in positioning all beings as beings, the divine power "preserves the order and direction of all beings for the proper good of each."<sup>108</sup> As such "it strengthens those which are unified towards friendship and communion . . . and keeps those which are distinct both unconfused and unmixed."<sup>109</sup> In all of this the divine power lets beings be so that "each being is according to its proper logos and definition."<sup>110</sup>

Thus, Pseudo-Dionysius understands the divine power in terms of justice, preservation, and redemption. For him justice is not merely a political or ethical virtue; it functions as a cosmic and ontological principle. Beings are just when they "mind their own business" so as to attain what is their due.<sup>111</sup> Insofar as beings are just they exist according to their nature, for the nature of each prescribes what is due for it, what is necessary for it to attain to its proper unity and completion. Now, for each being to attain to its own nature, the natures of all beings must themselves sub-sist without confoundment. This is made possible by the divine justice; for it

<sup>105</sup> See *D.N.* VIII.1.889C.

<sup>106</sup> *D.N.* VIII.2.889D.

<sup>107</sup> *D.N.* VIII.3.892B.

<sup>108</sup> *D.N.* VIII.5.892C.

<sup>109</sup> *D.N.* VIII.5.892C.

<sup>110</sup> *D.N.* VIII.5.892C.

<sup>111</sup> Thus Pseudo-Dionysius implicitly accepts Plato's conception of justice which is developed in the *Republic*. See *D.N.* VIII.7.

determines the orders for each being according to the really be-ing and most just definition; . . . it imparts those things which are proper to each being according to what is due for each being and preserves the nature of each being in its proper order and power.<sup>112</sup>

The divine justice has also a conservative function and thus is named "preservation." For Pseudo-Dionysius justice and preservation seem to be synonymous; nothing is explicitly said of preservation which is not said of justice. Like justice, preservation "excludes the doing of what is another's business from the whole."<sup>113</sup> I would note that the words "from the whole" are important here, for while there is no opposition in nature as a whole, much opposition and failure to mind one's own business does prevail among individual beings. The question of how this is so is part of the problem of evil, and is something to which I shall turn my attention in the next section.

Beings do not always attain what is due to them; some fall short of this while others exceed what is due to them. That is, beings suffer from injustice and evil. Yet no being is inherently evil<sup>114</sup> and all beings can be brought from evil and injustice (disorder) to goodness and justice (order). It is the redemptive capacity of divine power which makes this possible. Indeed, it is the redemptive power of justice which also prevents beings from falling away from order to disorder. The power of redemption "[keeps] beings from falling away from their own proper goods—insofar as the nature of each is receptive of preservation—by its own goodness which preserves all together."<sup>115</sup>

The divine power positions all things in 'such a way that they are preserved in their identity and difference. Beings attain to their own proper unity only by being kept apart from what is not suitable to them; and they are kept apart from what is not suitable to them only by attaining to their proper unity. This unifying function eminently belongs to the divine peace.

This [cause] indivisibly crosses over to the whole as though like bolts that bind together those which are divided; it defines, limits, and provides for all. It does not permit those which are divided to slip away into infinity and indefiniteness and come to be dissolved, unfounded and destitute of God, such that they depart from their own unity and become thoroughly mixed up with one another.<sup>116</sup>

<sup>112</sup> *D.N.* VIII.7.896A-B.

<sup>113</sup> *D.N.* VIII.9.897A.

<sup>114</sup> *D.N.* IV.23.724D, 24.725C.

<sup>115</sup> *D.N.* VIII.9.897A.

<sup>116</sup> *D.N.* XI.1.949A.

In allowing for all beings to abide in their own proper unity, the divine peace does not abolish all difference. For beings attain to their own unity only by being kept distinct from one another *and* from the divinity. For Pseudo-Dionysius the divine peace is eminently a just peace. For if the divine peace abolished all difference, it would abolish beings themselves; for beings are as beings only in the *differentiation* of the divine unity.

#### D. *The Representation of Divine Causality in Terms of Vertical and Circular Imagery*

In this final section I wish to consider the vertical and circular or spiral imagery which is used to represent the relation between beings and the divinity.<sup>117</sup> Both types of imagery are present in Pseudo-Dionysius, although I wish to show that the vertical imagery is subordinated to the circular/spiral imagery.

In the differencing of itself in beings, the divinity manifests itself as an ordered hierarchy of beings. It sends the rays of its goodness first to those beings which are nearest to it—the highest among beings—and then extends them downward to the last among beings.<sup>118</sup> Thus the hierarchy of beings exhibits a vertical structure—highest to lowest—which affords the basis of a vertical/spatial representation of the relation between beings and the divinity. One of the most common forms of this image is the “great chain of being.”

Although few would accept this spatial imagery as it stands—for this would require belief that the soul, intellect and the divinity were bodies—this imagery constantly pervades our language and also Pseudo-Dionysius’ language. Through prayer and contemplation we aspire upward to the divinity, and the divinity looks down upon us in providing for us. Most important, the divinity is the “highest” being. All such phrases suggest that the divinity is the summit of being—the highest being—from which all other beings derive their being and are suspended, as if on a great chain.

This vertical imagery, especially when one articulates it in terms of a great chain, not only represents the overarching preeminence of the divinity as that of the highest being but it also represents the links between the various hierarchies of beings. For the links in the “great chain of being” symbolize that all beings are connected together with one another and that all are connected to the divinity which is the first link in this hierarchy and the source of it.

To be sure, this model does not represent the radical simplicity of

<sup>117</sup> See Jill Pruce, *The Mystic Spiral*, (New York, 1974).

<sup>118</sup> D.N. IV.1.693C-696A.

the divinity in respect of beings. To symbolize this one may replace the "great chain" with a pyramid. The point at the top represents the divinity in its simplicity, while the base of the pyramid represents the totality of material beings. Alas, this image requires that the base of the pyramid which supports the entire pyramid represent the material beings which are the least supportive among all beings.

Instances of these vertical images are clearly present in the writings of Pseudo-Dionysius.<sup>119</sup> For the vertical imagery of beings and the divinity connotes a hierarchical structure to beings and this structure predominates in Pseudo-Dionysius' conception of the order of beings. Indeed, he is the first to use the word "hierarchy" systematically to explicate the structure of beings.<sup>120</sup> Moreover, this vertical imagery dominates Western thought<sup>121</sup> and, apparently, much religious thought.<sup>122</sup> Clearly the experience of the majesty of the divinity seems to require an image which presents the divinity as standing radically above all that is, as the summit to which we must attain through prayer, contemplation, and salvation.

Nevertheless, this vertical imagery, which inevitably represents the divinity as the first and highest being which exists apart from beings, is subordinated to a circular imagery in the writings of Pseudo-Dionysius. I will develop this image in the context of divine causality. We see the development of this imagery in the following texts:

The divine love is like an everlasting circle moving around in unerring convolution through the good, out of the good, in the good, and to the good, always advancing, abiding and returning in the same and according to the same.<sup>123</sup>

And in a center all the lines are together in one union and the point holds all the straight lines in itself uniformly united both to each other and to the source from which they proceed. In the center itself they are completely united but standing away slightly from the center they are slightly separated, but when more apart they are more separated. And, in a word, the nearer they are to the center the more they are united to it and each

<sup>119</sup> D.N. III.1.680B-D, IV.1.693C-696A, IV.20.720C-721D.

<sup>120</sup> See R. Hathaway, *Hierarchy and the Definition of Order*, (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1969), p. 25.

<sup>121</sup> See Jill Pruce, *loc cit*.

<sup>122</sup> See especially Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane*. (Harcourt Brace and World, Inc., 1959), Chap. I. As Eliade shows, the vertical imagery is mediated by the symbol of the center of the world. The tribe lives and has access to the gods by dwelling at the center of the world, for it is the center which gathers the tribe into being.

<sup>123</sup> D.N. IV.14.713A. See Plotinus, *Ennead* VI.9.8.

other; the more they stand apart from it, the more they stand apart from each other.<sup>124</sup>

The divine love is an ecstatic or erotic motion in which the divinity "leads and conserves all in being, providing for all in every manner, and is present to all by its unbounded encompassing of all and by its providential processions and activities in all."<sup>125</sup> This motion is further imagined to be straight, circular, and spiral. The divine straight motion is the "non-wandering and unswerving procession of its activity and the genesis of the whole out of itself."<sup>126</sup> The motion of the divinity is spiral (winding) in its steadfast procession and fecund rest."<sup>127</sup> Finally, in its circular motion it "returns into itself all those which have been brought forward out of itself."<sup>128</sup>

Clearly this imagery does not support or find place in an exclusively vertical imagery. How are beings to revolve about the divinity in a great chain of being? Further, in the vertical imagery the divinity is positioned at the top of the hierarchy as the source of the hierarchy and its creative motion is a descending linear motion. In circular imagery, on the other hand, the divinity is not only the center or source nor is the divine motion simply that of a point revolving in a circle. The divinity is the circle (or, better, a circling); it is center (source), radii (divine powers), and all the points revolving about the center (the totality of beings)—and wholly beyond the circle.

Suppose we ask "Where is the divinity?" If we accept the vertical imagery then we answer the question by pointing "upward." For the vertical imagery expresses the theism or theistic perspective which positions the divinity as the summit of beings, which is beyond and above all beings. But how do we answer this question in the context of the circular imagery we are developing? Where do we point to designate the center? We cannot point to something like the sun which is a source of life for our planet; and we cannot point downward to the center of the earth. We cannot point to an activity in which we are engaged or to our intellectual perspective, for while these may constitute the temporary center of the world they do not constitute the center of beings. We cannot point inward toward ourselves, even though the mystical unity with the divinity requires that we abandon all to be drawn inward to ourselves. For in drawing inward to ourselves we also abandon ourselves. We cannot point anywhere, for the

<sup>124</sup> *D.N.* V.6.821A.

<sup>125</sup> *D.N.* IX.9.916C.

<sup>126</sup> *D.N.* IX.9.916C.

<sup>127</sup> *D.N.* IX.9.916C.

<sup>128</sup> *D.N.* IX.9.916C. See *D.N.* IV.8.9 for the description of the straight, circular, and spiral motion of the intellects and souls.



divinity: nothing and nowhere. Yet we can "point" everywhere for the divinity is all. Where is the center? It encompasses all, goes through all, is within all, and binds all together in bringing forth all out of itself.<sup>129</sup> Where is the center? Everywhere and nowhere. It is around and in and, indeed, is all beings, yet nothing at all.

The center is all that is; [itself]: nothing. The center: the positioning of all, the denial of all, and beyond all positioning and denial.<sup>130</sup> Thus the theism which positions the divinity above all must yield both to pan-theism and to a-theism which, in the culmination of negative theology, "are" without difference.

It is evident that we cannot imagine the divine center to be itself determinate; thus the model of a geometric circle is profoundly misleading. For the center of a geometric circle is itself a determinate point which is to be distinguished from all other points in the circle. The divine center: simply and *unlimitedly* be-ing. This unlimitedness is best imagined for Pseudo-Dionysius through fire; indeed, for him, fire is the most appropriate of all sensible symbols. This image is skillfully and beautifully developed in the *Celestial Hierarchy*, and I shall now present the text in which it is developed. However, we must first note one decisive inadequacy of this symbol, as well as of any material symbol, for representing the divinity: fire shows itself only on a matter which is given to it and which is not from out of it. Yet all that is in any way is from out of the divinity.

For the sensible fire is, so to speak, in everything and passes unmingled through everything. It springs from all and while all lit it is, as it were, hidden and unknown in its nature, where there is no material lying near it upon which it may show its proper energy. It is both uncontrollable and invisible, self-subduing all beings and bringing under its own energy anything in which it may happen to be. It varies and imparts itself to all that is near it, whatever that may be; it renews by its rousing heat and gives light by its uncovered illuminations. It is invisible, unmingled, separating, unchangeable, elevating, penetrating, lofty, subject to none, ever-moving, self-moving, moving others, comprehending, incomprehended, needing no other, imperceptibly increasing itself in displaying its own majesty to the materials receiving it. It is energetic, powerful, present to all, unobserved, seeming not to be, and manifesting itself suddenly according to its own proper nature by friction, as it were, by a sort of seeking; it again flies away and it is impalpably undiminished in all by the joyful distribution of itself.<sup>131</sup>

<sup>129</sup> D.N. V.9.825A.

<sup>130</sup> D.N. II.4.641A; M.T. II.1000B, V.1048B.

<sup>131</sup> C.H. IV.2.329A-C. Our translation is based on the one by J. Parker (1895). [*The Works of Dionysius the Areopagite*, (London, 1895)].

The unlimited and abiding center differentiates and limits itself in be-ing beings. The be-ing of beings is the ecstasis which is the divinity, in which the divinity does not wander out of itself and beings do not wander away from the divinity. For beings attain to be-ing only in reverting into the divinity. That is, the procession of the divinity out of itself into being necessarily involves the reversion of beings and the divinity into the divinity. Thus the divinity is that from out of which ( $\epsilon\kappa\ \sigma\acute{\iota}$ ) beings emerge, that in which ( $\epsilon\nu\ \phi$ ) beings dwell, and that into which ( $\epsilon\iota\varsigma\ \delta\nu$ ) all beings return.<sup>132</sup>

Emerging from out of the divinity, beings subsist and are given be-ing. That is, they are allowed to stand as beings and are positioned as other than the divinity. The divinity is "that out of which beings are and subsist as being brought forward out of the all-complete cause."<sup>133</sup> Yet the totality of beings emerges as an analogically ordered hierarchy. In this order all the logoi of beings are bound together into one universal logos or nature and nothing is allowed to stand completely apart from other beings or the divinity. Rather, beings *are* through dwelling in the divinity as the power which lets them stand together and which binds them together. The divinity is that "in which beings are bound together as being protected and held fast in its almighty power."<sup>134</sup> Now a being attains to be-ing and completion only through attaining to its limits, as these are determined by its logos. In attaining to its limits it becomes like the divinity in a way appropriate to itself. As a likeness of the divinity it is returned into the divinity, for the divinity is the completion and logos of all beings. The divinity is that "into which all beings are returned as into the limits which are proper to each being."<sup>135</sup>

In all of this the divine eros is like an everlasting circle whirling about itself in unerring convolution. The procession of beings out of the divinity is the procession of beings out of the center: the procession of the center—which is everywhere and nowhere—out of itself. The genesis of beings be-ing is the ecstasis of the divine center out of itself straight through and into beings. In be-ing, beings are gathered together into the unity of their logos; thus they are returned into the divinity. Beings are returned into the divinity by revolving about the divinity. The ecstasis of the divinity out of itself, such that it returns to itself in revolving about itself, is the divinity wandering about itself in a non-erring convolution. The divinity—abiding unity and ecstatic differentiation: the winding of [itself] about [itself] and into [itself].

<sup>132</sup> *D.N. IV.4.700A-B.*

<sup>133</sup> *D.N. IV.4.700A.*

<sup>134</sup> *D.N. IV.4.700A-B.*

<sup>135</sup> *D.N. IV.4.700B.*

Come then and let us collect all powers into one and say that there is a single and simple power which is moveable of itself toward a unified mixture from out of the good down to the last among beings and, subsequently, back again from this, through all and into the good. It revolves out of itself, through itself, and upon itself, always and in the same way reverting upon itself.<sup>136</sup>

<sup>136</sup> D.N. IV.17.713C. ἀγε δὴ καὶ ταύτας πάλιν εἰς ἓν συναγαγόντες, εἰπωμεν, ὅτι μία τις ἐστὶν ἀπλή δύναμις ἡ αἰτοκινητικὴν πρὸς ἐνωτικὴν τινα κράσιν ἐκ τάγαθου μέχρι τοῦ τῶν ὄντων ἐσχάτου, καὶ ἀπ' ἐκείνου πάλιν ἐξῆς δια πάντων εἰς τάγαθόν ἐξ ἑαυτῆς, καὶ ἐφ' ἑαυτῆς ἑαυτὴν ἀναγκλοῦσα, καὶ εἰς ἑαυτὴν ἀεὶ ὡσαντῶς ἀνελιττομένη. This passage is attributed to Hierotheus by Pseudo-Dionysius.

By way of closing it should be noted that, of course, no spatial imagery is adequate to representing the divinity. Indeed, the circular imagery is no better than the vertical imagery which I have been criticizing if one merely locates the divinity as the center of a circle with the hierarchies of beings extending out to the circumference. It must be emphasized that the center of a circle is itself a determinate point; hence, it would represent what is most unified and least differentiated. The divinity is, of course, not to be located on the circle as it *is* the circle and wholly beyond the circle.



### SECTION III

#### THE PROBLEM OF EVIL

My concern in this section is with Pseudo-Dionysius' conception of evil. There is a twofold task, since, for him, evil itself is in no manner whatever, while nevertheless evil can befall beings and beings can be said to be evil. My first task is to articulate why for Pseudo-Dionysius evil itself "is" nothing at all; my second task is to explain how evil can be said of beings.

##### A. *Evil Itself*

The problem of evil is crucial in Neoplatonism generally. Clearly any thinking which "posits" the good as that from out of which emerges all beings be-ing, such that be-ing is *always* be-ing good, must describe and in some way account for what most of us experience and name as evil. This must be done, if only to show that such naming is in error. The decisiveness of the problem of evil in the *Divine Names* is heightened since there evil itself is said to be in no manner whatsoever (μηδαμῇ μηδαμῶς ὄν).<sup>1</sup> This, clearly, seems to contradict most human experience.

The importance of this problem is recognized by Pseudo-Dionysius; it receives a longer and more systematic treatment than any other single problem in the *Divine Names*. It is raised after the celebration of the divine names of good, beauty, and eros. Further, it figures prominently in the discussion of the divine justice (*D.N.VIII*) and the divine peace (*D.N.XI*), and is also the subject of a concrete discussion in *Letter VIII*, which is written to Demophilus, an unjust (and probably fictional) monk who profanes the Holy of Holies as a result of what he considers to be an unjust action of a priest.<sup>2</sup>

Since most of this discussion will be centered on *Divine Names*,

<sup>1</sup> *D.N.* IV.32.732A. For a treatment of evil which parallels Pseudo-Dionysius' see Proclus, *de malorum substantia* and St. Augustine, *de libro arbitrio*. For the relation of Proclus' and Pseudo-Dionysius' teaching on evil, see H. Koch "Proklus als Quelle des PseudoDionysius Ar. in der Lehre vom Bosen" *Philologus*, 54 (1895), pp. 438-454 and J. Stiglmayr, "Der Neuplatoniker Proklus als Vorlage des sogen Dionysius Areopagita in der Lehre vom Ubel," *Historisches Jahrbuch im Auftrag der Correspondenzgesellschaft*, XVI (1895), pp. 253-73; 721-748.

<sup>2</sup> In his book *Hierarchy and the Definition of Order in the Letters of Pseudo-Dionysius*, Ronald Hathaway shows the dependence of the character of Demophilus on the character of Callicles in Plato's *Gorgias*.

Chapter IV, I shall give a brief summary of that part of Chapter IV which deals with the problem of evil, namely the last eighteen sections (18-35). Section 18 contains the first set of questions regarding the problem of evil. Section 19 contains the first of two extended statements on evil; these emphasize that evil is in no way and that it does not pertain to the be-ing of beings; this section also contains further questions regarding the "nature" of evil which are based on this provisional exposition of evil. Section 20 contains the second extended statement about evil. It articulates the good as productive of all beings and evil itself as destructive, and also sets forth the hierarchical ordering of beings according to their participation in be-ing and in the good. This section also sets forth the meaning of non-completion (ἀτελής), lack (ἐλλειψις), and privation (στέρησις) as they pertain to evil. Section 21 shows that evil is not inherent in the be-ing of beings; it also investigates the relation between evil and God. Sections 22-28 investigate the relation between evil and particular types of beings: angels (22), demons (23),<sup>1</sup> souls (24), irrational beings (25), nature (26), bodies (27), and matter (28). Section 29 contains some brief remarks on the relation of privation to evil. Sections 30, 31, and 34 contain a discussion of the good, evil, and causality. Section 33 deals with the problem of evil in the context of the providence of the good. Finally, section 35 affirms our human responsibility for the evils which we commit. Our analysis of the problem of evil will concentrate on sections 19 and 20.

The problem of evil is raised by Pseudo-Dionysius immediately after his celebration of divine good, beauty, and eros. I have already engaged in extensive discussions of the nature of these powers and will now only summarize those discussions to provide a context for the problem of evil.

The good names the divinity in its causality as the power which brings all beings into be-ing. However, the good is nothing among

<sup>1</sup> There is a curious preeminence given by Pseudo-Dionysius to the problem of evil demons. He poses the question as to how they can be regarded as the cause of all evils which befall them as well as all others that are said to be evil; he spends much time showing that they are not inherently evil. The overbearing presence of this problem is perhaps explained by the fact that during the First Century A.D., which is when his writings are supposed to have been written, there was a preoccupation with the conception of evil in various apocryphal treatises which did maintain that evil demons were the ultimate causes of evil.

Also by keeping in mind the time at which the Corpus is supposed to have been written, we may be able to account for the absence of any discussion of the problem of original sin. For, this problem does not get seriously discussed until the time of St. Augustine. For all of this see Henri Rondet, *Original Sin : The Patristic and Theological Background*, (New York: Ecclesius Press, 1972).

beings but "is" wholly beyond being (*ὑπερούσιος*); it "is" wholly non-be-ing (*τὸ καθολοῦ μὴ ὄν*). Through the presence of the good, beings are; they are gathered together into a unified totality which is expressed as an hierarchical order or cosmos. This gathering of beings into be-ing lets be an harmony and symmetry among them which is their beauty.

That beautiful beyond being is called beauty, for it gives beauty from itself in a manner appropriate to each; it is the cause of the consonance and splendor of all; it flashes forth upon all—after the manner of light—the beauty-producing gifts of its flowing ray; and it calls all to itself, whence it is called beauty.<sup>4</sup>

This gathering of beings into be-ing is ecstatic or extensive; beings extend themselves toward their being and the good; the good extends itself towards beings. This ecstasis of be-ing is eros: "a simple, self-moved, erotic motion—active of itself, before be-ing in the good, flowing forth out of the good to beings, and returning again into the good."<sup>5</sup> Thus,

all that is and comes to be both is and comes to be through the beautiful and good. All look toward it, are moved by it, are conserved by it, are for the sake of it, and are through it . . . for every being the beautiful and good is desired, loved, and beloved . . . every being produces and intends whatever it produces and intends by desiring the beautiful and good.<sup>6</sup>

But, clearly, does not the givenness of our own experience demonstrate the error of such a view? For this view makes goodness, beauty, and love not merely aspects of be-ing but considers them as "essential" to the be-ing of beings. Everything that is, is good and beautiful; there is no evil. How preposterous! The sorrow of human history and the constant destruction in nature clearly point to a tragic and ugly dimension in the world. How can one deny that there is evil, that there are times when evil itself seems to constitute the be-ing of beings? The teaching of Pseudo-Dionysius bids that we tolerate not only a paradox between itself and our own experience but an outright contradiction. For if there is evil, then be-ing is not always be-ing good, and all that is cannot be from the good. For how can the good bring forth what is wholly opposed to it any more than heat could bring forth what is cold? The problem of evil is not merely incidental to the teaching of Pseudo-Dionysius; it is decisive for the truth of his teaching and is capable of reducing that teaching to an absurdity.

<sup>4</sup> D.N. IV.7.701C.

<sup>5</sup> D.N. IV.14.712C

<sup>6</sup> D.N. IV.10.705C.

We can understand why Pseudo-Dionysius asserts that evil "is" be-ing in no manner whatsoever by considering how be-ing is manifest in beings. Be-ing manifests itself as always be-ing (*ἀεί ὄν*) or coming to be (*γινόμενον*).<sup>7</sup> What always is (*τὸ ἀεί ὄν*) remains in the identity of its logos. It always remains the same, never becoming other than what it is. Always be-ing, *τὸ ἀεί ὄν* is what truly or exclusively is (*τὸ ὁντως ὄν*). However, what comes to be (*τὸ γινόμενον*) comes "toward" be-ing and unity. The coming-to-be of a house is the gathering up of the materials which make up the house into the unity and order which constitute, and are imposed by, the form or *eidos* of the house. The house *is* so long as its unity and order are preserved. A community, civil or ecclesiastical, comes into be-ing in the gathering of individuals into a unified and hierarchical order. The community *is* so long as its members remain just by performing the activities which are appropriate to them, as determined by their place in the hierarchy.

All be-ing by tending towards unity and order tends toward completion (*τέλος*). What *is* is what has attained and is maintaining its telos. Now what always is, is what is most complete precisely by fully attaining (better: be-ing) the identity and order appropriate to its logos and always remaining and resting in that identity. However, what comes to be is never fully be-ing, since not always be-ing. It must be brought to be-ing and remains under constant threat of passing out of be-ing. Such being must struggle to attain completion under the constant threat of losing it. But the telos of the being, its achieved unity and order, is its goodness. Thus, whatever is, insofar as it is, is good. (Of course, none of this is unique with Pseudo-Dionysius. It is a common Greek philosophical notion of the relation between be-ing and goodness, although the emphasis on unity and goodness as primarily determinative of and transcending all be-ing is largely Neoplatonic.)

Now all the logoi, natures and causes within and beyond being are expressions of unity. They are that by means of which all beings are as they are. We have recourse to these "structures" when we attempt to comprehend beings in their be-ing. For when we ask "What is it?" of a being, we call for a specification of the logos or nature by means of which the being is what it is. We ask for the formal causes of the being. When we ask "Whence comes it?" of a being, we are also asking for the causes, both proximate and ultimate, from which the thing is. These questions, it would seem, can be asked of anything that is.

Thus, if we are to maintain that there is evil as such or that there are evil beings as such, and if we are to seek to comprehend beings as evil, we must seek a logos or cause of evil—evil itself (*αὐτὸ τὸ κακόν*)—

<sup>7</sup> D.N. IV.20.721D.



by means of which and from which beings are *as* evil. But what meaning does evil have? It is frequently said that death, disease, viciousness, injustice, and destruction in nature are evil; and all of these point to a lack of order and unity in the beings in which they occur. Disease marks disorder in the body, death marks the termination of life, viciousness and injustice mark disorder in the soul, and destruction in nature marks the constant warring and strife which take place in nature.

Evil, then, seems to point to a diremption or loss of unity and order in beings or to a failure to attain order and unity, a fall from be-ing or a failure to attain be-ing. But how, in that case, can any being *be as* evil? How could there *be* an absolutely evil being, a being which is evil (severed from unity) in every respect? How could there be a logos or cause of evil as such? For if be-ing as manifest in beings is pre-eminently what always *is* (and, as such, what suffers no evil) and evil marks the *diremption* of be-ing as such, then it would seem that evil itself cannot be in any way nor could it be the logos or cause of evil as a particular way of be-ing.

All that is emerges from out of the good. Evil is neither from the good nor is it be-ing, but it “is” in no way whatever. Since evil is not be-ing, evil itself would seem to be that which is not (τὸ μὴ ὄν). Yet “evil is neither in what is nor in what is not but it has a greater absence and estrangement from the good than even that which is not.”<sup>8</sup> Evil (itself) is not that which is not (τὸ μὴ ὄν). What sense, then are we to make of τὸ μὴ ὄν?

One could identify matter with that which is not; however, this identification is too narrow for Pseudo-Dionysius. We would suggest that along with matter, that which is not names what comes to be (τὸ γιγνόμενον) or that which only somehow is (τὸ πῶς ὄν).<sup>9</sup> Taken strictly, τὸ ὄν (that which is) is always and completely be-ing (ἀεὶ ὄν); it is *what is* exclusively (ὄντως). However, unless we plan to deny be-ing to a being which comes to be, we must grant it some share in be-ing. Such a being comes to be in time; it only “was” or “will be” in the fleeting instants when it is. Such a being is not properly be-ing but is not be-ing (μὴ ὄν).<sup>10</sup> “That which in some way is, and in some way is not, is *not*—so far as it has fallen from always be-ing—and *is*—so far as it has participated in *being*; its whole *being* and non be-ing is preserved and sustained through this participation.”<sup>11</sup>

<sup>8</sup> D.N. IV.19.716D.

<sup>9</sup> See D.N. IV.20.720A-721A.

<sup>10</sup> This interpretation is based on Plato, *Timaeus* 37C-38B.

<sup>11</sup> D.N. IV.20.720A. τὸ δὲ πῇ μὲν ὄν, πῇ δὲ μὴ ὄν, καθ' ὅσον μὲν ἀπαπέπτωκε τοῦ ἀεὶ ὄντος, οὐκ ἔστιν, καθ' ὅσον δὲ τοῦ εἶναι μετέληψε κατὰ τοσούτον ἔστι, καὶ τὸ ὅλως εἶναι καὶ τὸ μὴ ὄν αὐτοῦ διακρατεῖται καὶ διασώζεται.

This identification of τὸ μὴ ὄν with τὸ πῶς ὄν will be important later; it provides the foundation for identifying or naming that which partakes more or less in the good (τὸ μᾶλλον ἢ ἥττον ἀγαθόν) with incomplete good (τὸ ἀτελὲς ἀγαθόν). For the present, however, what are we to do with evil itself? Since all being is from the good, evil itself is wholly separated from the good and would seem to “be” wholly non be-ing (καθόλου μὴ ὄν). But “nothing is wholly non be-ing, except that this is said of the good in a way beyond being (κατὰ τὸ ὑπερούσιον).”<sup>12</sup> The good itself: the wholly nothing beyond all being. Thus non be-ing, taken absolutely and primarily, leads beyond the fullness of beings and not to an emptiness of be-ing to which evil itself leads. The good: μὴ ὄν as ὑπερούσιος (non be-ing as beyond being); while evil itself: μὴ ὄν as μηδαμῇ μηδαμῶς ὄν (non be-ing as be-ing in no manner whatever). Both good and evil, then, lead to an abyss of beings and be-ing.

## B. Evil and Beings

Although evil itself “is” absolutely nothing, there still is a sense for Pseudo-Dionysius in which beings can become and “be” evil. My second task will be to articulate this sense of evil. The analysis is based largely on two texts from *D.N.IV.20*.<sup>13</sup> These texts provide the basis for characterizing the evil in beings and for setting forth the ways in which beings can “be” evil. To this end I shall set forth first the coordination of the ways of be-ing and the ways of be-ing good; second, the analogical presence of the good and beings to one another. Third, and most importantly, I shall articulate the distinction between a failure to be completely good, which is inherent in the logoi of some beings and which is not evil, and the failure of beings to be according to their logos, which is evil. Finally, I will discuss in more detail the ways in which beings can “be” evil.

The coordination of the ways of be-ing with the ways of be-ing good is fairly evident from earlier discussion. I only wish to formalize the relations here. On the one hand, what always is (eternal being) is already and always fully complete. Such a being, as fully complete (παντελής) is fully good (παν-αγαθόν). Thus, what always is (τὸ αἰὲν ὄν) is what is fully completed (τὸ παντελὲς ὄν) or what is wholly good (τὸ παναγαθόν = τὸ παντελὲς ἀγαθόν). Such a being is that in which the good “comes to be completely and has complete, unmixed, and whole goods.”<sup>14</sup>

<sup>12</sup> *D.N. IV.19.716D*. οὐδεν γὰρ ἔστιν τὸ καθόλου μὴ ὄν, εἰ μὴ ἐν τάγαθῳ κατὰ τὸ ὑπερούσιον λέγοιτο.

<sup>13</sup> *D.N. IV.20.720A, 720C-721B*.

<sup>14</sup> *D.N. IV.20.717C*.

On the other hand, a being which somehow is and which somehow is not (τὸ πῶς ὄν) is more or less, where this "more or less" is determined according to the *logos* (ana-logically) of each being. Further, such a being is neither fully nor always completely good; that is, that which is in some way (τὸ πῶς ὄν) is that which is in some way good (τὸ πῶς ἀγαθόν). Such a being is more or less good to the degree that it shares in the good. Such a being has an incomplete (ἀ-τελής) and mixed goodness through its lack of the good.

Finally, that which is in no manner whatever has entirely fallen from the good and "is" entirely separated from the good. Thus, τὸ μηδαμῇ μηδαμῶς ὄν (be-ing in no manner whatsoever) and τὸ πάντῃ ἀμόριον τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ (what is wholly without the good) say the same (which is absolutely nothing). These correlations have a more definite specification with respect to the hierarchy of be-ing and beings: intelligible and wholly intelligent beings (angels) are all-good beings while human beings, animals, plants, inanimate beings and matter are more or less good in a descending order from human being to matter.

Pseudo-Dionysius also expresses the various ways of being good in terms of the presence of the good to beings.

It is wholly present to some, present in a diminished fashion to others, and in the extreme it is present to others as each is able to partake of it. Thus some beings partake wholly of the good, some are more or less deprived of it, some have a share of the good, some have a share of the good in a more inferior manner, and to others which are the last among beings, the good is present as an echo.<sup>15</sup>

This text seems both to say that the good is not wholly present to all beings and that not all beings share in the whole good. Rather, there is a more or less whole presence of the good to beings which is determined by the capability of beings to partake of the good. Yet this view is contradicted by other texts, of which the following will serve as an example. "This is common, a unity, and one for the whole divinity: it is participated in wholly and entirely by all of those participating in it; none participate in only a part of it."<sup>16</sup>

I have already investigated the sense of the "whole" divinity; I wish now only to review it in the present context. How can the good be wholly present to all beings which participate in the whole of it if some beings are only partially good? Pseudo-Dionysius tries to answer this question through an example of the relation between a seal and its impressions, where the seal is not whole and the same throughout each

<sup>15</sup> D.N. IV.20.717D.

<sup>16</sup> D.N. II.5.644A.

of the impressions. Thus, when a seal is impressed on a variety of things it is *wholly and entirely* impressed on (present to) each thing. Moreover, each thing on which the seal is impressed receives the whole seal into it.<sup>17</sup> This, however, does not preclude a vast qualitative difference in the various impressions of the seal; some may be clear and permanent while others may be indistinct and dissolve rapidly. Thus, the seal is wholly present to each and entirely participated in by each of the things to which it is impressed, yet due to the qualitative differences among the impressions, the seal is present to (as manifested by) each seal more or less clearly. Whence arise these qualitative differences? Solely from the capacity of what is impressed by the seal to take faithfully and retain the impression made by the seal.

This example views the good as a single logos or form "impressed" on all beings, and views the capacity of individual beings to be good as due solely to their capacities as individuals. According to this example, good "impressions" made upon each individual being are not due to the good or from the good, except insofar as the various beings are impressions of the good at all only by having shared in the good.

Although there are a number of defects in this example which render it inadequate to symbolize the relation of the good and beings to one another (and Pseudo-Dionysius does not claim that it is adequate), there is one particular defect which is decisive for our problem and which could lead to a serious misunderstanding of Pseudo-Dionysius' teaching on evil. This defect is that the example posits only one logos for all beings. But, in fact, there are a plurality of logoi; the good does not unfold itself as one logos but as a hierarchy of logoi present analogically to beings and to which beings are to be present analogically (according to their logos). As we will see, this will allow us to locate some failure among beings to be completely good in the logoi of those beings; and this in turn will entail that not all failure to be completely good is evil.

Thus, while the example we mentioned locates *all* failure to be completely good in the individual being as such, we must distinguish between a failure (which is not evil), to be completely good inherent in the logos of some beings, and a failure (which is evil) to be good on the part of the individual, in terms of which the individual fails to be according to its logos. For Pseudo-Dionysius, not all failure to be good as such is evil; yet the example we discussed allows for precisely this identification.

Let me explicate the sense of this distinction in more detail, by contrasting the all-good angels with the more or less good beings subject

<sup>17</sup> D.N. II.6.644B.

to matter. An angel is "... an image of God, a manifestation of the unmanifested light, a pure mirror, what is most clear, without flaw, undefiled, and unstained so that it receives the whole richness of the good-formed divine idea."<sup>18</sup> Whence derives the capacity of these beings to be in this way? "The good . . . sends the rays of its whole goodness to all beings. . . . By reason of these rays they [the angels] are and have their life, continuous and undiminished, and are purified from all destruction, death, matter, and genesis."<sup>19</sup>

The angels are not all-good simply because the whole good is present to them or even because they receive the whole good into themselves; their goodness is due to their sharing in and reflecting the good in a flawless, undefiled, and "unsoiled" manner. As the text above implies, their capacity to reflect the good this way is due to their not being subject to matter or change; it is due to their incorporeal reception of this good. But this capacity itself is not due to the individual angels' capacities as individuals but to their logoi. What has been said does not, however, mean that the individual angels as such contribute nothing to this goodness or that they cannot become evil, for the demons are fallen angels.

On the other hand, the whole order of beings which are changing and subject to matter are only more or less good or incompletely good. Such beings can never be completely good precisely because they are *naturally* only more or less good. Their failure to be completely good is due to their logos (nature); it is an essential aspect of their being. However, such failure to be completely good is not evil, for it is in conformity with the temporal natures of these beings. Thus, if being good lies in being according to one's nature, the non-complete way of being good inherent in the logoi of some beings is not evil.<sup>20</sup>

The following example will illustrate more concretely this ambiguity in the notion of failing to be completely good. Pseudo-Dionysius

<sup>18</sup> *D.N.* IV.22.724B.

<sup>19</sup> *D.N.* IV.1.693B.

<sup>20</sup> This proposition provides the basis for Pseudo-Dionysius' response to the problem of evil and the divine justice and peace. All of the objections which Pseudo-Dionysius poses to his conception of the divine justice and peace in relation to evil regard *all* non-perfection as evil. The following text from *D.N.* VIII.7.896A-B offers a good complement to our discussion thus far. "Those who rail against the divine justice unknowingly convict themselves of a distinct injustice for they say that immortality is due to mortals, and completion to those which are non-complete, that there is a necessity of being moved by others for those who move themselves, that sameness is due to those who become other, a complete power to those who are weak, eternity to those beings in time, unchangeableness to those who change by nature, and that temporary pleasure should be everlasting. In general they believe that what is given to some belongs to others. It is

indicates that the good is present, as an echo, to the last among beings. On the one hand, he describes the way in which the licentious man participates in the good as an obscure echo of unity and friendship.<sup>21</sup> On the other hand, the sun (which is frequently used as a visible illustration of the good) is also described as an echo of the good.<sup>22</sup> What is the sense of "echo"? In what way is the sun an echo of the good? In what way is the licentious man an echo of the good?

Now, ἠχώ ("echo") denotes a sound and, in particular, a returned sound, a re-sounding. The use of ἀπό (as meaning "back again") intensifies the notion of "return." Thus, an ἀπήχημα is a returning or reflecting of a presented sound. In this sense all beings are echoes of the good, for they reflect, according to their capacity, the whole good which is present to them. However, ἀπό has a privative sense of "away from," ἀπήχημα denotes a returned sound which falls away from the original sound by failing to repeat the clarity of the original sound. Such a re-sounding falls away from the original sound by being an obscure, non-complete, or even discordant re-sounding.

In what way is the sun an echo of the good? As a merely existing being the sun lacks (or very dimly manifests) life and wisdom. As permeated by matter, the sun is incapable of reflecting "clearly" the whole good present to it; the sun is an obscure and non-complete re-sounding of the whole good. This, however, is in conformity with the logos of the sun. Presumably, however, the sun does not lack any of the "perfections" appropriate to its own logos; and thus, while it is an obscure and incomplete re-sounding of the good, it is not a discordant or disorderly (παρὰ τὴν τάξιν) re-sounding of the good. The sun is an echo of the good according to its being; it is naturally (analogically) among the last of beings.

The licentious man, however, is an echo of the good through his failure to be human. Human being as such, far from merely existing, possesses life and wisdom and is capable of becoming one with the divinity through mystical contemplation. This, however, presupposes that one be morally virtuous and live in conformity with reason. The

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necessary to know that the divine justice is a true justice, since it imparts those things which are proper to each being according to what is due to each being, and since it preserves the nature of each in its proper order and power."

Thus, for Pseudo-Dionysius death and destruction are not in themselves evil for "only those beings (ὁνταί) capable of receiving destruction can be destroyed, not those which are by nature indestructible." (D.N. IV. 23.724D)

<sup>21</sup> D.N. IV.20.717B.

<sup>22</sup> D.N. IV.4.697C.

licentious man fails to do this because of the tyrannical presence of various bodily desires and the absence of reason as the "master" of his soul which reason should be there. The licentious man fails to be rational; he fails to be according to his logos. His re-sounding of the good present to him is disorderly and evil. The licentious man is *unnaturally* among the last of beings.

Pseudo-Dionysius characterizes the evil of a being as its failure to be according to its nature.<sup>23</sup> In this he follows the traditional doctrine of evil as *privatio boni*. Let us again look more closely at the two ways in which a being can "be" evil. The following text, sets forth these two ways, although we shall have to refer to other texts to exhibit this.

For if evil is non-complete good, and the complete absence of the good would involve the absence of both mixed and complete goods, then evil will be and be seen only in respect to those to which it is opposed, and will be removed from others as good.<sup>24</sup>

To explain the sense of this passage we must examine the analogical relations among beings. Now all individual natures are expressions of universal nature. None of these natures are opposed to universal nature; consequently, there is no evil in nature taken as a whole.<sup>25</sup> No way of be-ing as such is in opposition to the whole of nature, nor is it evil. But, on the one hand, this does not preclude the opposition and incompatibility of certain natures or ways of be-ing with one another, ". . . for some beings as individuals, some ways of be-ing will be in conformity to their natures and others will not."<sup>26</sup> Further, the mere incompatibility of some ways of be-ing with one another does not necessarily prevent those ways of be-ing from being present to one another. Yet, on the other hand, there are some ways of be-ing which must be present in a being if it is to completely function according to its nature.

When does evil arise? It arises when a being possesses a way of be-ing which is incompatible with its nature, or when it lacks a way of be-ing which is necessary for it to completely function in conformity with its nature. Evil arises, if you will, in an apple tree which is incapable of bearing fruit. Evil arises in a lion when the "brutish desires" which let it be a lion are removed.<sup>27</sup> However, evil arises in the licen-

<sup>23</sup> For his use of this formulation of evil see *D.N.* IV.25-27, 30, and 32.

<sup>24</sup> *D.N.* IV.20.721A. *ἐι γὰρ τὸ κακὸν ἀτελὲς ἐστὶν ἀγαθὸν ἀπουσία παντελεῖ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ καὶ τὸ ἀτελὲς καὶ τὸ τέλειον ἀγαθὸν ἀπέσται, καὶ τότε μόνον ἔσται καὶ ὀφθῆσεται τὸ κακὸν ἥνίκα τοῖς μὲν ἐστὶ κακὸν οἷς ἡγαντῶται.*

<sup>25</sup> *D.N.* IV.26.728C.

<sup>26</sup> *D.N.* IV.26.728C.

<sup>27</sup> See *D.N.* IV.23.725A.

tious man by the presence of such "brutish" desires *and* accordingly by the absence of reason as the "master" of his soul.

Now these ways of be-ing—reproductive ability, anger, lust, and reason—are not evil in themselves. For the moment, let us say that evil is either the particular presence to one another of these ways of be-ing which are incompatible with one another or the absence of ways of be-ing from one another which should be present to one another. For, such presence or absence constitutes a disorder in the beings in which it occurs. Evil arises in and "is" the failure of the proper relations among beings or the ways of be-ing which an individual possesses. Thus, we may give the following sense to the text we cited earlier: evil is, and is seen, only when some way of be-ing is present in a being to which it is analogically opposed or removed from other beings to which it is not opposed.

Hence, evil itself: nothing at all; that which is evil (perhaps better thought as "that which *is*, but evilly") *is*, but not in conformity with its nature. Evil points to non be-ing. But this negativity of be-ing which is evil cannot be thought of simply in terms of mere negation; it must be thought of as a non-analogical falling way from or failure to come toward be-ing. That is, it must be thought as a contrariness to what is (*παρὰ τὴν οὐσίαν*) and should be by nature. "Evil is contrary to the path, contrary to intention, contrary to nature, contrary to cause, contrary to source, contrary to end, contrary to definition, contrary to wish, and contrary to subsistence."<sup>28</sup>

Evil arises in a being both when ways of be-ing which are not compatible with it are present to it or in it, and when ways of be-ing which are "essential" to it are absent from it. I have also indicated that evil (which is itself be-ing in no manner whatever) is to be thought of in terms of non be-ing or failure to be. Yet do the terms "presence" and "absence" adequately emphasize the negativity of evil? Or do they not regard evil as a way or mode of be-ing? For "presence" (*παρουσία*) signifies be-ing besides or be-ing present to something; absence (*ἀπουσία*) signifies be-ing away from (something). Thus something can *be* beside, or present to, or in something else: visual perceptions are present to the eye, persons can be present to one another through love, and the divinity totally presences itself to all beings. Something can also *be* absent from something else: one's name can be absent (not be present) from a list of names and an individual can be absent from a football game (thus, be present elsewhere).

Now, none of these illustrate evil occurrences. A body, however, is

<sup>28</sup> D.N. IV.32.732C.



said to suffer evil when any disease is present to it. An individual is said to be unjust and evil when subjected to an excessive presence of sensible appetites and an absence of reason. For Pseudo-Dionysius, "disease is a lack of order, but not of every order. For if this were so, the disease itself would not subsist. Yet the disease is and abides by having being with the least possible order; it subsists along with the order."<sup>29</sup> A disease *is* (thus it is good); yet when it subsists in a body it can render the body incapable of be-ing according to its nature; thus the body suffers an evil. Yet it is neither the body itself, nor the disease itself, nor even the presence of the disease in a body which "is" the evil in a diseased body. The evil "is" the incompatibility of the disease and the body; it is the contrariness between the disease and the body. That is, the evil in beings: a contrariness to what subsists (*παραφιστημένον*). In a diseased body the disease subsists along with the body, but between the disease and the body arises a contrariness to what subsists. It is not the presence (*παρουσία*) of the disease in a body which is evil; evil is rather the contrariness to being (*παρὰ τὴν οὐσίαν*) which arises in a diseased body. This contrariness to being describes all evil for Pseudo-Dionysius: "for demons evil is what is contrary to a good-formed intellect; for souls, evil is what is contrary to reason; and for the body, evil is what is contrary to nature."<sup>30</sup>

Now the preposition *παρὰ* does not only express "contrariness"; indeed, its basic sense is the spatial one of "alongside of" or "by." Hence Pseudo-Dionysius articulates the production of all beings as the *παρουσία* (presence) of the good to beings. Similarly, the English prefix "para" has the normal sense of "alongside of" or "by" (as in "parallel" and "paramedic"), yet in a few instances, "para" does connote the sense of "contrary" or "contradictory," as in "paradox."

This negative sense of the prefix "para" will allow more adequate expression of the negativity of evil than we can express by the terms "presence" and "absence."

To see this negative sense consider what we call a paradox. Mutually incompatible or contradictory propositions are called paradoxes. (No proposition by itself is paradoxical unless it be self-contradictory, in which case its parts are mutually incompatible with one another. In any case, no word taken by itself can be paradoxical.) Now, the para-

<sup>29</sup> D.N. IV.29.729C. καὶ νόσος ἔλλειψις ἐστὶ τάξεως, οὐ πάσης. εἰ γὰρ τοῦτο γένηται, οὔτε ἡ νόσος αὐτῇ ὑποστήσεται, μένει δὲ καὶ ἔστιν ἡ νόσος, οὐσίαν ἔχουσα τὴν ἐλαχίστην τάξιν, καὶ ἐν αὐτῇ παραφισταμένη.

<sup>30</sup> D.N. IV.32.733A. δαίμονι κακὸν τὸ παρὰ τὸν ἀγαθοειδῆ νοῦν εἶναι, ψυχῇ τὸ παρὰ λόγον, σώματι τὸ παρὰ φύσιν. Indeed not even παραφιστημένον univocally signifies evil. For, see fn. 29 above, disease is said to subsist along with its order (ἐν αὐτῇ παραφιστημένη).

dox is not another proposition in addition to the given ones. The paradox is the contradiction (the failure of consistency) between the propositions. The paradox is the contradictoriness (para) of the propositions to one another (dox). Thus the substantive character which is implied by the noun "paradox" is misleading; a paradox is neither a "substance"—in this case a proposition—or (a logical) relation. It is the failure of (a logical) relation; it is the failure of (a logical) relation which should be there among certain determinate propositions.

How, then, are we to express the contrariness which is evil? Well, the suffix "-ence," which is derived from "*esse*," means "be-ing." Thus "presence" (*prae*-ence) means *to be* before; and "absence" (*ab*-ence) means *to be* away. Both these words express ways of be-ing. However, if evil "is" a failure to be which "appears" as a contrariness "between" beings, perhaps we can express evil as *parasence* (contrariness to be-ing). Thus, the parasence of a diseased body: a *failure* to be according to the nature of the body. Parasence does not mark either the body as such or the disease as such, for neither of these is inherently evil. Parasence is not a way of be-ing or a relation between beings. It "is" the contrariness between incompatible ways of be-ing; parasence "is" a failure of an analogical relation between beings.

I have so far attempted a discussion of Pseudo-Dionysius' conception of evil. For him, as we have seen, evil itself: nothing at all; what is evil: a parasence (contrariness to what subsists). Yet so far we have not broached the questions "Why is there evil?" or "Whence comes evil?" Indeed, one will look in vain through Pseudo-Dionysius' writings to find the answers to these questions. This of course seems strange, for although he denies that evil itself "exists" he does "recognize" that beings "are" evil. Thus, does not his failure to answer these questions constitute a serious inadequacy in his treatment of evil, especially since he recognizes the fundamental importance of the problem of evil? It is clear that we are not interested simply in explaining why particular individuals or situations go bad or become evil. Indeed, there is no question that we can enumerate or give a more or less successful account of the factors which contribute to evil. Rather we are concerned with the question, "Why should there be evil at all?"

Such a question asks for a cause of evil and, indeed for the ultimate cause and source of evil. Yet the ultimate cause of evil would be evil itself. But evil itself—be-ing in no manner whatever—"is" wholly devoid of power and unity; thus, it cannot be a source or cause, for every source and cause empowers beings to be by making them one. The question "Why is there evil at all?" is a mistaken question; for, it seeks an ultimate cause where there is none. However, in denying the legiti-

macy of this question we do not seek to explain evil away; rather, we indicate that evil is uncaused and unexplainable.<sup>31</sup>

It is essential to recognize that an explanation of evil which, say, would be possible in Plato's *Timaeus* is not possible for Pseudo-Dionysius. In the *Timaeus*, the Demiurge fashions the cosmos by subduing the disorderly powers which confront it, thus reducing them to order. Now the Demiurge is conceived by Plato on the model of a craftsman, who works on powers which are given to it but which are not produced by it. Apart from the creative activity of the Demiurge, these powers are disorderly; that is, they are not of themselves a purposeful imaging of the forms. If disorder constitutes evil—either as a falling from or as a failure to attain order—we can posit these primitive powers (disorderly motion) as the causes of evil. For, Plato (or more accurately, *Timaeus*), indicates that the Demiurge does not and apparently cannot completely overrule these powers and bring them to order.<sup>32</sup> Indeed in the *Laws* we are told that we must affirm the existence of an evil soul—an inherently disorderly self-motion.<sup>33</sup>

Yet for Pseudo-Dionysius all that is in any way whatever is from out of the divinity; there are no powers which are not completely from out of it. Hence we cannot understand the production of beings be-ing on the analogy of a craftsman which works on an "other" which is given to it but which it has not completely brought forth from itself. For even if there are always beings be-ing (which there are) and, thus, even if there is always something which is other to the divinity, the divinity is always and already that other.

Finally, we cannot explain evil—or better, explain it away—by maintaining that it is necessary. The totality of beings always is and, indeed,

<sup>31</sup> Of course if evil is unexplainable, it is equally unexplainable as to how Christ—who is "like us in every respect but sin"—was able to overcome sin since, he, as human, was capable of sinning.

As we said earlier, the good and evil: an abyss of beings be-ing. Unity with "this" abyss constitutes the culmination of negative theology. Yet in this culmination, good and evil are both ultimately denied, for negative (mystical) theology denies all reference to beings. Negative (mystical) theology is more than a completely intelligible comprehension of beings in which the totality of beings is comprehended as perfectly good. Negative (mystical) theology requires the denial of goodness itself, for this always marks and is the divinity in reference to beings.

<sup>32</sup> See Plato, *Timaeus* 48A-53C. For a further discussion of the problem of evil in Plato see L. Ballew, "Straight and Circular Motion in Parmenides and the *Timaeus*," *Phronesis*, XIX (1974), pp. 189-209; H. Cherniss, "The Source of Evil According to Plato," *Proc. of Am. Phil. Soc.*, 98 (1954), pp. 23-30, and G. Vlastos, "Disorderly Motion in the *Timaeus*," *Classical Quarterly*, 330 (1939), pp. 71-83.

<sup>33</sup> See Plato, *Laws* 896 D-E.

always must be since the divinity produces it by its own *being* (αὐτῷ τῷ εἶναι). Yet this does not entail that evil must be; for if so, the divinity (the good) would be determined to bring forth what is totally opposed to it. For Pseudo-Dionysius, this is not possible. Further, many beings are themselves necessarily non-complete; yet such non-completion is due to the nature of these beings, and it does not entail that the beings which are determined by these natures should either fail to attain to or fall from their natures.

## SECTION IV

### THE DIVINE DARKNESS OF UNKNOWING

In Section II I interpreted the nature of negative theology in the following way: the practice of negative (mystical) theology culminates in an ecstatic unity with the divinity which requires that one deny all reference to beings and, thus, that one deny the sameness and difference which prevails between the divinity and beings. That is, the practice of negative (mystical) theology requires that one deny the divinity as cause. For in understanding the divinity as cause we understand it in reference to beings. This section will continue our examination of this matter; my task is twofold: (1) a discussion of the texts in the *Divine Names* and *Mystical Theology* which indicate the tension between cause and "beyond cause" and (2) a final discussion of the nature and task of negative (mystical) theology.

#### A. *Beyond Cause*

My discussion of the ultimate denial of causality will center around four texts from the *Divine Names* and the *Mystical Theology*: *D.N.I.5.-593C-B*, *D.N.V.8.824A*, *D.N.XIII.3.980C-981A* and *M.T.V.1048B*. In addition I shall also conclude the discussion of the problem which I raised in Section II, of how we are to understand the notion of support (*ὑποστάτης*).

First let us consider the following text from *Divine Names* I.5.

... it is cause of all, but itself: nothing, as apart from all beyond every manner of being. It is permissible for none of those who are lovers of the truth beyond all truth to celebrate the thearchic beyond-beingness, whatever is the beyond-source [or, constitution] beyond goodness, as logos, power, intellect, life, or being, . . . [for] it is preeminently apart from [or, beyond every manner of having] everything whatsoever that is be-ing. But since it is cause of all by its *being*—as source [or, constitution] of goodness—the good-source procession of the godhead is to celebrated in reference to all beings.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *D.N. I.5.593C-D*. ὅτι πάντων μὲν ἐστὶ τῶν ὄντων αἷτιον, αὐτὸ δὲ οὐδὲν, ὡς πάντων ὑπερουσίως ἐξηρημένον. τὴν μὲν οὖν ὑπερουσιότητα τὴν θεαρχικὴν, ὃ τι ποτὲ ἐστὶν ἢ τῆς ὑπεραγαθότητος ὑπερύπαρξις, οὔτε ὡς λόγον, ἢ δύναμιν, οὔτε ὡς νοῦν, ἢ ζῶην, ἢ οὐσίαν ὑμνῆσαι θεμιτὸν οὐδενὶ τῶν ὅσοι τῆς ὑπὲρ πᾶσαν ἀληθείαν ἀλθείας εἰσὶν ἐρασταί . . . [ἀλλὰ'] ἀπάντων ὅσα ὄντα ἐστὶν ὑπεροχικῶς ἀφηρημένην. ἐπειδὴ δὲ ὡς ἀγαθότητος ὑπαρξις, αὐτῷ τῷ εἶναι πάντων

In this text the divine cause is named constitution or source of goodness (ἡ πῆς ἀγαθότητος ὑπαρξίς). This naming is repeated in *D.N.V.1.*; there Pseudo-Dionysius in conformity with the theologians calls the thearchic constitution itself goodness.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, elsewhere in the *Divine Names*, the divinity is called cause "because it has brought forward all beings by its being-producing goodness."<sup>3</sup> Thus, as we have already seen, there is virtually an equivalence between the notions of goodness, constitution, and cause. The divine constitution is the divine causality which brings forth all beings by its constitution (αὐτῷ τῷ ὑπάρξει).<sup>4</sup>

How, then are we to understand ἡ τῆς ὑπεραγαθότητος ὑπερύπαρξίς? This phrase occurs only once in Pseudo-Dionysius' writings; this is the only occurrence in his writings and, perhaps, in Greek literature, of the term ὑπερύπαρξίς. As indicated, divine goodness (ἀγαθότης) is the cause of all that is. Goodness names the divine difference or the divine procession and reversion. Thus, beyond goodness (ὑπεραγαθότης): the abiding divine unity, the source and cause beyond every source.<sup>5</sup> Yet the abiding divine unity is ἡ ὑπερουσίως ὑπαρξίς.<sup>6</sup> To exhibit the abiding divine unity as source we can translate ὑπαρξίς as "source" rather than "constitution." Thus, the abiding divine unity is the source beyond goodness; since this is the ultimate source of the divine goodness, the abiding divine unity is the source beyond goodness (ἡ ὑπεραγαθότης ὑπαρξίς). Yet the divinity: beyond-source, beyond goodness (ἡ τῆς ὑπεραγαθότητος ὑπερύπαρξίς). Beyond all, the divinity is not a supreme essence or being beyond all other things. Beyond all, the divinity is not the ultimate source or cause of all that is. Beyond all, [the] divinity: nothing (οὐδέν)<sup>7</sup>—beyond source and beyond cause.

For Pseudo-Dionysius, the divinity

is not this but not that, it is not in some way but not in another way. It is all as cause of all—co-having and before-having in itself all the sources and ends of all beings—but beyond all: beyond being beyond-beingly before all.<sup>8</sup>

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ἐστὶ τῶν ὄντων αἰτία. τὴν ἀγαθαρχικὴν τῆς θεαρχίας πρόνοιαν ἐκ πάντων τῶν ὄντων ὑμνητέον.

<sup>2</sup> See also *D.N. IV.1.693B*.

<sup>3</sup> *D.N. I.4.592A*.

<sup>4</sup> *D.N. IV.1.693B*.

<sup>5</sup> *D.N. XI.6.956A*.

<sup>6</sup> *D.N. II.4.641A*.

<sup>7</sup> And hence, I would note, *logos* ends itself in silence.

<sup>8</sup> *D.N. V.8.824A*. καὶ γὰρ οὐ τόδε μὲν ἐστὶ, τόδε δὲ οὐκ ἐστὶν, οὐδὲ πῇ μὲν ἐστὶ, πῇ δὲ οὐκ ἐστὶν, ἀλλὰ πάντα ἐστὶν, ὡς πάντων αἴτιος, καὶ ἐν αὐτῷ πάσας ἀρχὰς, πάντα συμπεράσματα, πάντων τῶν ὄντων συνέχων καὶ προέχων, καὶ ὑπὲρ τὰ πάντα ἐστὶν, ὡς πρὸ πάντων ὑπερουσίως ὑπέρων.

This text emphasizes the abiding “character” of the divine cause. For the divinity is cause before-having all the sources and ends of beings in itself. The divine cause before all having: before be-ing (*πρόων*), be-ing before all (*ὣν πρὸ πάντα*). This be-ing before all is not a being which is somehow (*πῶς*) or in some way (*πῇ*) be-ing. The divine be-ing before all: be-ing beyond every manner of being (beyond-beingly be-ing). That is, divine be-ing: be-ing beyond all (*ὑπὲρ πάντα οὐσίῃ*).<sup>9</sup> Hence, be-ing signifies causality. Yet in this text, beyond all is “contrasted with” be-ing and causality. For beyond all: beyond be-ing beyond-beingly before all (*πρὸ πάντων ὑπερονσίως ὑπέρων*) and beyond be-ing beyond all (*ὑπὲρ πάντων ὑπερούσιῃ*).<sup>10</sup> Beyond all: not a supreme being which is be-ing in itself apart from all other beings; beyond all: nothing (*οὐδέν*). We must not understand nothing simply as no-thing or no-being, so that we understand nothing as be-ing itself (*ipsum esse*), or as simply and unlimitedly be-ing. Rather, nothing: beyond be-ing and hence, beyond cause.<sup>11</sup>

For Pseudo-Dionysius, the divine cause is the “authoritative Trinity.”<sup>12</sup> In the following text we see that both cause and Trinity (as well as unity) are denied of the divinity.<sup>13</sup>

The divinity beyond all is celebrated as one and trinity; it is neither unity nor trinity nor what is conceived by us or by any other being. That we may truly celebrate its beyond unity and god-genesis, we name that beyond-name by trinity and a unitary divine name; we name the beyond-being by beings. But no unity or trinity or number, or oneness, or anything among beings, or anything known among being; brings down the hiddenness—beyond all and beyond logos and intellect—of the beyond divinity beyond be-ing beyond-beingly beyond all.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>9</sup> D.N. I.7.596C; M.T. IV.1040D.

<sup>10</sup> For this last phrase, see M.T. I.2.1000A.

<sup>11</sup> This I would note, is because “be-ing” and “causality” say the same for Pseudo-Dionysius.

<sup>12</sup> D.N. II.4.641A.

<sup>13</sup> On this point I disagree especially with Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church* (England, 1957), p. 31, that this text supports the view that “in his [Pseudo-Dionysius’] treatise of the Divine Names. in examining the name of the One which can be applied to God, he shows its insufficiency and compares it with another and “most sublime” name—that of Trinity, which teaches that God is neither one nor many but that He transcends this antinomy, being unknowable in what He is.” This text does not affirm Trinity over unity; it denies both Trinity and unity.

<sup>14</sup> D.N. XIII.3.980D-981A. διὸ καὶ μονὰς ὑμνονμένη, καὶ τριάς ἢ ὑπὲρ πάντα θεότης, οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδὲ μονὰς, οὐδὲ τριάς ἢ πρὸς ἡμῶν ἢ ἄλλον τινός τῶν ὄντων διεγνωσμένη, ἀλλὰ ἵνα καὶ τὸ ὑπερηνωμένον αὐτῆς καὶ τὸ θεογόγον ἀληθῶς ὑμνήσωμεν τῇ τριαδικῇ καὶ ἐνιαίᾳ θεωνυμίᾳ τὴν ὑπερίωνμον ὀνομάζαμεν, τοῖς οὐσι τὴν ὑπερούσιον. οὐδεμία δὲ μονὰς, ἢ τριάς, οὐδὲ ἀριθμὸς, οὔτε ἐνότης, ἢ

This text is decisive in that it denies all difference in respect of the divinity—both difference in the divine unity (the Trinity) and difference in the divine difference (beings be-ing). Thus, it denies all generation, causation, and manifestation. It is important to note that Pseudo-Dionysius does not simply deny the Trinity as we know it. To be sure, he does deny the Trinity as we know it, for our knowledge has its limits in being and the Trinity is beyond being (ὑπερούσιος). Indeed, the persons of the Trinity are “present beyond every manner of being through a simplicity which is thrust beyond the whole divine unity.”<sup>15</sup> Nevertheless, the Trinity is a “three-person manifestation of the fecundity beyond being.”<sup>16</sup> Yet neither Trinity nor fecundity “brings down the hiddenness beyond all.” Beyond divinity, beyond be-ing and beyond all: nothing—neither one, nor three, nor source, nor cause.<sup>17</sup>

For Pseudo-Dionysius the divinity is all as cause of all; [itself]: nothing. In the most radical sense, “beyond all” is not the supreme cause, or be-ing beyond all. Rather, beyond all: beyond be-ing, beyond source, and beyond cause. Yet, as we saw in Section II.B, our author calls the support of all ὑπὲρ πάντα ὑπερουσίως ὑπέριον (beyond be-ing beyond-beingly beyond all).<sup>18</sup> However, a support is a support of; thus to say that the divinity is support of all beings is not to deny all reference to beings. One might object that if “beyond be-ing” expresses the most radical divine separation, and yet is thought of as a support, then the divinity beyond be-ing is not beyond cause. Yet this objection will not do, precisely because the notion of support is a way of thinking about or rendering intelligible (the) divine beyond be-ing. That is, Pseudo-Dionysius introduces this term to render intelligible the unspeakable and unknowable divinity by coordinating the divinity to beings.

Having taken this [the divine peace] as unspeakable and unknowable in itself, let us investigate its intelligible and spoken

γονιμότης, οὐδὲ ἄλλο τι τῶν ὄντων ἢ τιμὴ τῶν ὄντων σθνεγνωσμένων, ἐξάγει τὴν ὑπὲρ πάντα καὶ λόγον καὶ νοῦν κρυφύτητα τῆς ὑπὲρ πάντα ὑπερουσίως ὑπερουσίως ὑπερθέοτος.

It is interesting to observe how Sarracen, Corderi, and several other translators write *Trinitas* for τριάς when this name is affirmed but write *trinitas* for τριάς when it is denied.

<sup>15</sup> D.N. XIII.3.980B. διὰ τὴν ὑπερβάλλουσαν τῆς ὅλης θεικῆς ἐνότητος ἀμέρειαν ἐν ἣ πάντα ἐνικῶς σινηῖται καὶ ὑπερήνεται καὶ πρόεστιν ὑπερούσιως.

<sup>16</sup> D.N. I.4.592A. τὴν τριπύστατον τῆς ὑπερουσίου γονιμότητος ἔκφασιν.

<sup>17</sup> Here ends my discussion of the first three texts cited at the beginning of this section. The balance of this section will culminate in an interpretation of the fourth text cited. M.I. 1048B.

<sup>18</sup> D.N. XI.6.953A.



participations . . . First it is necessary to say that it is support of peace itself.<sup>19</sup>

That is "support" seeks to make the divinity intelligible by coordinating it to beings. Yet beyond be-ing: beyond all intellection. We see another indication that the notion of support makes the divinity intelligible to us at *Divine Names* I.4. Thus

when we both honor the thearchic hiddenness beyond intellect by non-searching, sacred, and reverent intellects and honor what is ineffable by a temperate silence—as we celebrate the good-giving source—[as] source of every source beyond-beingly beyond every source.<sup>20</sup>

Yet the source of every source beyond every source is the support of all. To be sure "support" expresses the divine separation from all; yet this term seeks to render this separation intelligible to us. Hence, "support," as a metaphysical way of thinking "beyond be-ing" must be denied in negative (mystical) theology.

Apart from all, the divinity: before having (*προέχον*) and beyond having (*ὑπερέχον*), before be-ing (*πρόων*) and beyond be-ing (*ὑπέρων*).<sup>21</sup> For Pseudo-Dionysius, before be-ing: the abiding cause of all; beyond be-ing: nothing. Apart from all, the divinity: before be-ing and beyond be-ing. "Before be-ing" expresses this separation as the eminence of the divine cause, while "beyond be-ing" denies all reference to beings. The distinction between *πρό* and *ὑπέρ* which is maintained in before be-ing (*πρόων*) and beyond be-ing (*ὑπέρων*) is also maintained in the verbs "before-having" (*προέχω*) and "beyond having" (*ὑπερέχω*), although "beyond-having" does have a causal significance so that it is not completely equivalent to beyond be-ing. Thus, on the one hand, in *Mystical Theology* V we see a tension between cause and *ὑπεροχὴ* such that *ὑπεροχὴ* denies cause.<sup>22</sup> Here, as we shall see, *ὑπεροχὴ* must be translated

<sup>19</sup> *D.N.* XI.1.949B-2.949C. The more radical "terminology" which we are here developing—such as beyond-source, beyond be-ing—does not render the divinity intelligible, for this terminology does not express any reference to beings.

<sup>20</sup> *D.N.* I.3.589B.

<sup>21</sup> For occurrences of *προέχω* see *D.N.* II.10.648C, IV.6.701B, 7.704A, V.5.820B, 8.824B, 9.825A-B, VII.2.869B, VIII.1.889D, 6.893C, IX.4.912C, XIII.1.997B. For occurrences of *προεἶμι* see *D.N.* IV.14.712C, V.5.820A (3 times), 8.821D, 824A (2 times), 10.825B. For occurrences of *ὑπερεἶμι* see *D.N.* V.5.820B, 8.824B, VII.1.865B, XI.6.953C, XIII.3.981A, M.T. I.2.1000B. For occurrences of *ὑπερέχω* see *D.N.* I.6.596B (2 times), II.10.648C, 649A, IV.3.697A, 6.701B (2 times), 15.713B, V.2.817A (2 times), 3.817B, 5.820B, VIII.1.889C, 2.889D, 892A, 7.893C, IX.5.912D, X.1.937A, XI.1.949B, XII.2.969C, 3.969C, 4.972A, XIII.1.977B, M.T. I.3.1000A, *Letter* V.1073A, 1076A.

<sup>22</sup> See especially *M.T.* V.1048B; *D.N.* VII.3.689D.

as “beyond-eminence” instead of “preeminence.” Yet in Greek thought generally, and also in Pseudo-Dionysius, the noun ὑπεροχή is used to express the preeminence of a cause over what it causes.<sup>23</sup> That is, for Pseudo-Dionysius, ὑπεροχή is ambiguous.

I wish to clarify this ambiguity by introducing the term προοχή; for this word, which is apparently used only once by Polybius,<sup>24</sup> is derived from προέχω. Thus we can make a nominative distinction between προοχή and ὑπεροχή which is similar to the verbal distinction between προέχω and ὑπερέχω where these are understood parallel in meaning to πρόωκ and ὑπερῶν. To be sure προοχή is never used by Pseudo-Dionysius. Yet since this term is used only once in Greek literature, we may feel free to develop an interpretation of it without violating any traditional meanings.

Thus, in the production of beings the divinity gives life, be-ing, and so forth to all beings as these are enabled to receive them. Beings receive these gifts by participating in them; beings are participants (τὰ μετεχόντα) in the divinity and their be-ing and life are participations (αἱ μετοχαί) in the divinity. By coming into being in the divine production (giving), beings come *after* the divinity and are *dependent* upon it; this is expressed in the prefix μετά in μετέχον and μετοχή.

In their production, beings are differentiated from the divinity and are let be as other than it. Yet before be-ing (πρόωκ): the divinity alone—the divinity and beings are without difference. Yet *having* (as participating [μετέχω]) engenders multiplicity, and the abiding divinity is without difference and multiplicity. Hence, the abiding divinity: before having (προέχον). Thus the prefix πρό (before) expresses the abiding divinity as the ultimate source of all beings; it expresses the divine preeminence. Nevertheless, the common substantive which expresses the pre-eminence of the divine cause (or of any cause, for that matter) is ὑπεροχή, for this term connotes a superiority or excellence which is not explicitly present in προοχή. Further, when we attend to the origin of ὑπεροχή in ὑπερέχω, we see that the pre-eminence of the divinity is a “beyond-having,” an absence of multiplicity and difference.

Insofar as we remain within affirmative theology or, more specifically, metaphysics, we articulate the divine preeminence over (separation from) beings as a causal preeminence; for affirmative theology

<sup>23</sup> See G. L. Prestige, *God in Patristic Thought*, pp. 25-32. For occurrences of ὑπεροχή see D.N. II.7.645B, IV.4.697C, 10.705C, VII.2.869A (2 times), 3.872A, IX.2.909C, XI.3.952B, XII.2.969B, 4.972B, XIII.2.977C, M.T. IV.1040D, M.T. V.1045D, 1048B. Some of these can be taken in either sense of ὑπεροχή as I develop it.

<sup>24</sup> For Polybius, προοχή has the sense of prominent point or eminence. See the entry for this term in 10th ed. of L.S.J.'s *Greek-English Lexicon*.

and metaphysics always comprehend the divinity in reference to beings even if, as with Pseudo-Dionysius, the divinity is no longer thought of as the first and highest being. Accordingly, for metaphysics there is no distinction between before having (*πρόεχον*) and beyond having (*ὑπέρεχον*); both terms express the preeminence of the divine cause.

Yet for Pseudo-Dionysius, the practice of negative (mystical) theology requires the denial of affirmative theology; that is, one must stand away from all reference to beings. Thus, one must deny the divinity "as" cause. This tension between cause and beyond cause—which appears as such only in discourse, and which is denied in the cessation of discourse—is expressed through a distinction between cause and *ὑπερ-χή*. That is, *ὑπεροχή* no longer expresses causal preeminence. Thus, since before-be-ing and before-having affirm causal preeminence, let us express the preeminence of the divine cause as *πρ-οχή*. How then do we translate *ὑπεροχή* in those contexts which deny cause? I would suggest beyond-eminence. For the eminence of the divinity is that it supports all as the ultimate cause. Thus, the abiding source of all beings: the divine pre-eminence (*πρ-οχή*), yet wholly beyond all and wholly absolved from all: (the) beyond-eminence (*ὑπεροχή*).

Thus, for Pseudo-Dionysius *ὑπεροχή* is fundamentally ambiguous. In one sense, it expresses the preeminence of the divine cause and it is the expression of negative theology within metaphysics. In another sense it, like *ὑπερίπαρξις* (beyond-source) and *ὑπέρων* (beyond be-ing), denies cause. It is the expresison of negative (mystical) theology which denies all expression. Thus, following the second sense, the closing passage of the *Mystical Theology* says,

There is universally neither position nor denial of it, while we produce positions and denials of those after it. Since, beyond all position: the all-complete and single cause of all; beyond all negation: (the) beyond-eminence (of that) absolutely absolved from all and beyond the whole.<sup>25</sup>

Beyond-eminence: not the highest being, and not even simply and unlimitedly be-ing. Beyond-eminence: nothing—absolutely absolved from all sameness and otherness. Beyond-eminence: (the) non-same and non-other.

### B. The Denial of All Logos

I shall conclude this study of the thought of Pseudo-Dionysius with an examination of negative (mystical) theology; my focus will be on

<sup>25</sup> M.T.V.1048B. αὐδὲ ἐστὶν αὐτῆς καθόλου θέσις οὔτε ἀφαίρεσις ἀλλὰ τῶν μετ' αὐτὴν τὰς θέσεις καὶ ἀφαιρέσεις ποιοῦντες, αὐτὴν οὔτε τίθεμεν, οὔτε ἀφαιροῦμεν, ἐπεὶ καὶ ὑπὲρ πάσαν θέσιν ἐστὶν ἡ παντελὴς καὶ ἐνιαία τῶν πάντων αἰτία, καὶ ὑπὲρ πᾶσαν ἀφαίρεσιν ἡ ὑπεροχὴ τοῦ πάντων ἀπλῶς ἀπολελυμένη καὶ ἐπέκεινα τῶν ὅλων.

the ultimate denial of affirmative theology and, especially, of metaphysics. Thus I shall conclude the discussion which I began in Section I, although I shall have benefit of the analyses in which I have engaged since that discussion.

After the invocation which opens the *Mystical Theology*, Pseudo-Dionysius tells Timothy what is required of him to practice negative (mystical) theology, as well as what he can expect to experience.<sup>26</sup>

And you, dear Timothy, in the earnest exercise of mystical contemplation, abandon all sensation and all intellectual activities, all that is sensed and intelligible, and all non-beings and all beings. Thus you will unknowingly be elevated, as far as possible, to the unity with that beyond all being and knowledge. By the irrepressible and absolving ecstasis of yourself and of all, absolved from all, and going away from all, you will be purely raised up to the rays of the divine darkness beyond being.<sup>27</sup>

To achieve unity (*ἑνωσις*) with the divinity one must abandon or absolve oneself from beings. Thus one must go away from (*ἀφέλων*) beings. This "going away" from beings, which is an indifference towards beings, is the radical ecstasis (standing outside) of oneself and all others. In this ecstasis one stands away from all that is sensed and intelligible; one "shuts out every support of knowledge"<sup>28</sup> and enters into unknowing (*ἀγνοσία*).<sup>29</sup> Thus one closes the "eye of the intellect" and plunges into unity with the darkness of unknowing. Mystical unity with the divinity is an abandonment to a darkness of unknowing.

One must, then, stand away from light and knowledge, for these obscure and preclude unity with the darkness of unknowing. This is vigorously asserted in *Letter I*.

Darkness comes to be invisible in the light and the more so as the light is greater. Knowledge makes unknowing invisible and the more so as the knowledge is greater. Do not receive this as a privation but pre-eminently; thus will you say beyond every

<sup>26</sup> I use "experience" to translate *παθών*. Thus at *D.N.* II.9.648B, we are told that Hierotheus not only learned but experienced the mysteries (*οἱ μύηται παθόντες ἄλλα καὶ παθόντες τὰ θεῖα*). I should emphasize the "passive" character of "experience" for this experience culminates in an indifference towards all and is itself an inactivity (*ἀνεργεία*). See I. P. Sheldon Williams, *Greek Christian Platonism* in the *Cambr. Hist. of Later Greek and Early Med. Phil.*, p. 468.

<sup>27</sup> *M.T.* I.1.997B-999A.

<sup>28</sup> *M.T.* I.3.1001A.

<sup>29</sup> I. P. Sheldon Williams, *ibid.*, p. 468-470, distinguishes between a stage of unknowing (*ἀγνοσία*) and unity (*ἑνωσις*) in *Mystical Theology*. I do not find this distinction in the text; I disagree with him that "unknowing" is the "place where God is." However, see *M.T.* I.3.1000D-1001A.

manner of truth that the unknowing in God is concealed to those having the light of be-ing and the knowledge of beings. That darkness which lies beyond is obscured to all light and hidden to all knowledge.<sup>30</sup>

Insofar as we have a knowledge of beings we are dwelling in the light of beings; thus far, we know the manifestations of the divinity. Yet such light and knowledge obscure and block access to the hidden darkness and unknowing which is the divinity. Yet how is the divinity manifest to us insofar as we are enlightened? What comprehension of the divinity are we to deny if we are to achieve a mystical unity with the divinity?

We find an answer to these questions in *Divine Names* I.3-4. For in these sections we are

to honor the thearchic hiddenness beyond intellect and being by non-seeking, sacred and holy intellects, and are to honor what is ineffable by a prudent silence. In this we are raised up to the illuminations of the sacred writings and are illumined by them . . . and celebrate the good-giving source of every light manifestation.

In this enlightenment we celebrate the divinity as "cause, source, being, and life of all," as "source beyond source," and as "unity, Trinity, and as cause."<sup>31</sup>

Thus if the practice of negative (mystical) theology requires us to stand out of the light of be-ing and to deny what is illuminated in this light, we must deny unity, Trinity, and cause in respect to the divinity. In denying the divinity as cause one denies metaphysics, for metaphysics is the comprehension of the divinity as cause of all that is. The culmination of negative (mystical) theology requires not that one deny that divinity is anything like beings, in order to affirm the preeminence of the divinity over beings. This is the task of negative theology within metaphysics. The culmination of negative (mystical) theology is the denial of all eminence or support. For in the practice of negative (mystical) theology one goes away from all to be one with that beyond all. Yet beyond all: ἡ ὑπεροχὴ (beyond-eminence).

Let us consider again the nature of metaphysical thinking to see why it must be denied in negative (mystical) theology. Metaphysics is the knowledge of beings as beings; that is, it is the knowledge of beings in respect of their causes. Now for Pseudo-Dionysius, in keeping with the metaphysical tradition, the first cause of all that is is the divinity. Thus to know beings as beings is also to know the divinity as the cause

<sup>30</sup> Letter I.1064A.

<sup>31</sup> D.N. I.3-4.589A-592A.

of all beings. As we saw earlier, Pseudo-Dionysius expresses this in the following way: "It is necessary that one posit and affirm all of the positions of beings of it (the divinity) as cause of all."<sup>12</sup> As we have seen, beings attain to a position insofar as they are let be and subsist as beings. Now what positions all beings is the divinity, for it is the positioning of all. Hence to know beings as beings is to know that they are positioned by the divinity. One knows beings as such by placing them or positioning them in relation to the divinity as the "effects" of its causality. In this positing, we affirm the divinity as the cause of all. Thus, in knowing beings as such, metaphysics affirms the divinity as the cause of all that is; it brings the divinity to light as the cause of all beings.

As we have shown earlier—especially in Section II—metaphysics also involves an aspect of negative theology. For since our affirmative knowledge is limited to being (*οὐσία*), we run the risk of mistaking the divinity as *a* being—a determinate "this something" within the totality of beings. Yet, for our author, we cannot regard the cause of all beings to be anything among beings; that is, the cause of all beings is neither a sensible nor an intelligible being. The first cause is not a being (*οὐσία*) but: simply and unlimitedly be-ing (*ᾧν*). Hence, if we are to affirm the divinity correctly to be the cause of all beings, we must deny that it is anything like the beings which it causes. Accordingly, although we must affirm goodness, being, wisdom, life and all the "powers of being" of the divinity, we must also deny that the divine goodness, being, life, and so forth are anything like the goodness, being, and life in beings. Further, beings are pluralized unities, while the divinity is free from all plurality. Thus although we affirm goodness of the divinity, we must deny that divine goodness involves any multiplicity. That is, we must deny any difference between the divinity itself and its goodness, its life, and so forth. That is, although one must affirm divine goodness, one cannot mean that the divinity is good—that it has or participates in goodness; for the divinity: before and beyond having goodness.

The divine goodness, goodness beyond good, is the abiding divinity. This goodness beyond good is the source of all that is good, even of goodness itself (the divine power of goodness). It is, as we have seen, source (of goodness) beyond every source (of goodness) and is preeminently good, where preeminence is to be understood as beyond-having. (The sense of preeminence of which we are now speaking is more appropriately termed *πρωτοχῆ*.) Thus, in affirming that the divinity is cause of all, we must deny that it is any being in order to express

<sup>12</sup> *M.T.* I.2.1000B.

its preeminence. This denial or negation within metaphysics is a pre-eminent denial, for it denies that the divinity is anything like beings in order to express the preeminence of the divinity over beings.

This negative theology within metaphysics does not culminate in negative (mystical) theology. To be sure, the practice of negative (mystical) theology which culminates in unity with the divinity is a "preeminent denial." But this denial does not take the form of denying that the divinity is anything like beings in order to express the ultimate preeminence which is the divine cause. The radical preeminent denial which culminates in mystical unity with the divinity stands away from everything that is revealed in the light of beings be-ing and denies pre-eminence (*πρροχῆ*); for beyond all and beyond all reference to beings: nothing-beyond eminence (*ἱπεροχῆ*) and wholly absolved from all.

All of this allows us to understand the radical denial which constitutes Chapter V of the *Mystical Theology*. The title of this chapter reads: "In 'preeminence' (*καθ ἱπεροχῆν*), the cause of all that is intelligible is not anything intelligible."<sup>33</sup> (I translate *ἱπεροχῆ* as "preeminence" for now; we shall see momentarily that it must be translated as beyond-eminence.) The chapter consists of a long series of denials; thus, the divinity is not power, light, life, being, one divinity, goodness and so forth. Now if we understand these denials in a metaphysical manner, we may interpret them as follows. These denials seek to express the radical preeminence of the divine cause. Since this cause is not an intelligible being, no intelligible characteristics can properly apply to it. Thus the divinity is not power, light, life, and goodness as these are understood by us, for as these are understood by us they are determinate intelligible powers which are subject to multiplicity. Yet for metaphysics the divine cause is the absolutely simple and ultimate source of all that is; this, indeed, is its preeminence. Consequently, to express this preeminence we must deny any multiplicity in respect of the divine cause. Hence the divinity is not goodness (as we understand it) but it is beyond goodness. That is, the divine cause is ultimate goodness and is goodness beyond good.

Yet this metaphysical interpretation of the denial in Chapter V of the *Mystical Theology* is not equal to the radical denial of negative (mystical) theology. For it does not take seriously the distinction between cause and *ἱπεροχῆ* which is given at the end of the *Mystical Theology*,<sup>34</sup> nor does it take seriously the distinction between affirmation and negation which is given in Chapter 1 of the *Mystical The-*

<sup>33</sup> M.T. V.1045D.

<sup>34</sup> M.T. V.1048B.

ology.<sup>35</sup> Moreover, this interpretation fails to note the twofold sense of goodness, being, and life, which is articulated in *Divine Names* XI.6. There—and the reader is referred to Section II for a discussion of this matter—goodness, being, and life are to be understood in both a causal and a primordial way as the source beyond every source and in a participated way as the powers which are given forth from out of the divinity to us. Here the first expresses the divine pre-eminence (understanding pre-eminence as *πρῶοχή*); while the second sense expresses the powers as intelligible beings.

Now while it is only in the second sense that goodness, life, power and so forth are intelligible beings; the first sense expresses the divinity in an intelligible way. For, as we indicated earlier, “source beyond source” (“support”) is our way of rendering intelligible the hidden and unknown divinity beyond be-ing; for this expresses the coordination of the divinity to beings. Thus, the metaphysical use of negative theology is to deny that the divinity is any intelligible being (goodness and life in the second sense) in order to express the preeminence of the divinity (goodness and life in the first sense). Yet in this denial it still renders the divinity intelligible.

However, negative (mystical) theology, the practice of which culminates in unity with the divinity, involves the denial of all that is intelligible and thus denies *every* attempt at making the divinity intelligible to us. For negative (mystical) theology, the divinity is *not* the ultimate and preeminent source and support of all. For negative (mystical) theology, the divinity: beyond source (*ὑπερῦπαρξίς*), beyond be-ing (*ὑπέρων*), beyond eminence (*ὑπεροχή*), beyond cause, and beyond support.

To practice negative (mystical) theology, one must deny all that is; one must go away from and absolve oneself from all beings, including oneself. For Pseudo-Dionysius, this denial is ecstatic. Yet how can this be? For in the *Divine Names*, we are taught that the divine ecstasis is the differencing of the divinity out of itself into all beings.<sup>36</sup> Indeed, the ecstasis of the divinity permeates all beings and sends all beings out of themselves to dwell among all other beings. Thus, far from driving the divinity away from beings or absolving beings from other beings, the divine ecstasis thrusts the divinity into beings and thrusts all beings into all others.

However, the divine ecstasis is not merely a procession or projection. For in standing (itself) out of itself it lets beings attain to the unity which is appropriate to their logos. The divine ecstasis is unity-

<sup>35</sup> *M.T.* I.2.1000B.

<sup>36</sup> *D.N.* IV.13.712A-B.



producing; that is, it turns beings back into itself and it is the reversion of itself into itself. The divine ecstasis is the giving of unity to beings within the sameness and difference that prevails between the divinity and beings.

The practice of negative (mystical) theology culminates in the unity with (that) beyond all. This unity is the radical reversion of oneself into the divinity which drives the divine ecstasis to its end. In its end or radical reversion into itself, the divinity is absolved from all beings and from all sameness and difference; thus, the one who practices negative (mystical) theology denies all that is to "be" "entirely of that beyond all—of nothing: neither oneself nor another."<sup>37</sup> The ecstasis of negative (mystical) theology denies the sameness and difference prevailing between the divinity and beings in order to experience unity with nothing: beyond all, non-same, and non-other.<sup>38</sup>

Yet in the denial of all that is and in the denial of affirmative theology and metaphysics, one does not declare affirmative theology to be false, nor does one regard all that is as a mere illusion. For, in the denial of beings and the logos which manifests these beings, one goes away from all and is *indifferent* to all beings and all logos. Thus we completely misunderstand the character of negative (mystical) theology if we regard it as a knowledge which is competitive with affirmative theology, or as if it were something which takes up a standpoint opposed to the standpoint of affirmative theology.

Negative (mystical) theology is not metaphysics; it does not seek to account for beings as beings by giving an account of the causes of beings. It does not offer an explanation of beings which seeks to compete with the explanation which is provided by metaphysics.<sup>39</sup> For the explanation of why beings are is the goal of metaphysics; the goal of negative (mystical) theology: nothing. Put another way, negative

<sup>37</sup> M.T. I.3.1001A. πᾶς ὢν τοῦ πάντων ἐπέκεινα, καὶ οὐδενὸς οὐτὲ ἑαυτοῦ οὐτε ἐτέρου.

<sup>38</sup> In mystical unity (ἔνωσις) one "experiences" and "is" the *abiding* divinity; for the divine abiding unity: divinity alone. Thus, unity (ἔνωσις) cannot be understood as participation (μετέχης), for "participation" expresses the difference between beings and the divinity. However, see Lossky, *Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*, pp. 38 and 93ff., for a radically opposed interpretation; Lossky's interpretation is based, in part, on a rejection of an "emanation" theology of the production of beings which is like the one we gave in Chapter II.

<sup>39</sup> Clearly, M.T. V. denies precisely the "concepts" of any explanation. My article in *Proc. Am. Cath. Phil. Assoc.*, LI (1977), p. 71 contains a crucial misprint of the text of the first sentence of this paragraph. The text in the article erroneously reads: "Negative (mystical) theology and, in particular, metaphysics seek to account for beings as beings by giving an account of the causes of beings."

(mystical) theology is not one logos among many; negative (mystical) theology culminates in the denial of all logos. Negative (mystical) theology does not take up a standpoint which is opposed to the standpoint of metaphysics; negative (mystical) theology demands the denial of every standpoint.<sup>40</sup>

In this attempt to analyse the character of affirmative and negative theology, I have of necessity distinguished these from one another and, indeed, seem to have opposed them to one another. Yet these are opposed only within discourse; the opposition itself is denied in the cessation of all discourse. Further, and more importantly from the standpoint of the texts of Pseudo-Dionysius and of understanding the enterprise in which he was engaged, the "two" theologies are intimately intertwined with one another. Thus it is appropriate that this study end with the text with which we began our examination of negative and affirmative theology.

The theological tradition is double, being on the one hand, a tradition which is not expressed in words and which is mystical and, on the other hand, a tradition which makes manifest and is better known. One is symbolic and aims at initiation; the other is philosophical and demonstrative. What is not said is woven together with what is said. One persuades and makes known the truth of what is said, the other fulfills and situates souls in God through a mystical guidance which is not learned by teaching.<sup>41</sup>

The intertwining of affirmative and negative theology which constitutes Pseudo-Dionysius' celebration of the divinity as it "moves around in unerring convolution" is most beautifully expressed in this text from *Divine Names* VII:

According to our power,  
we attain to that beyond all  
by a path and order  
in the denial and beyond-eminence of all, and  
in the cause of all.

God is known  
in all, and  
apart from all.

<sup>40</sup> For Pseudo-Dionysius metaphysics and, more generally, affirmative theology are always incomplete. This is evidenced in the following text from *M.T.* I.3.1001A. "The most divine and highest of what is seen and intelligible are hypothetical logoi (ὑποθετικοὺς λόγους) of what is subordinate to that beyond-having all."

<sup>41</sup> *Letter IX*.1106C-D. (See Section I.A, p. 15.)

God is known  
through knowledge, and  
through unknowing.

Of God there is  
intellect, reason, knowledge,  
sensation, opinion, imagination,  
everything else.

God is  
not known, not spoken, not named,  
not something among beings.

God is  
all in all,  
nothing in none,  
known to all in reference to all, and  
known to no one in reference to nothing.<sup>12</sup>

For me, participation in Pseudo-Dionysius' celebration of the divinity has required giving expression to this:

The divinity is all that is,  
Apart from all that is: nothing.  
Divinity: nothing.

<sup>12</sup> *D.N.* VII.3.869D-872A.



THE DIVINE NAMES  
(Dionysius the Presbyter  
to  
Timothy the Copresbyter)



## CHAPTER I

### CONCERNING THE INTENTION OF OUR DISCOURSE AND THE TRADITION REGARDING THE DIVINE NAMES<sup>1</sup>

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#### 1

And now, O blessed one, after having considered the *Outlines of Theology*,<sup>2</sup> I shall proceed as far as I am able to the unfolding of the divine names. Let the divine law of the writings<sup>3</sup> now determine us from the beginning of our inquiry: we are to make known the truth of what is said about God "not by trusting the persuasive logoi of human wisdom but by bringing forth the power"<sup>4</sup> of the Spirit which moves the theologians. Hereby, will you be ineffably and unknowingly joined<sup>5</sup> to what is ineffable and unknowable in a far greater union than we can attain through our rational and intellectual powers and activities.

B

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In general, then, one must neither dare to say—nor clearly, to conceive—anything about the hidden divinity beyond being contrary to what has been divinely manifested to us in the sacred writings.<sup>6</sup> For one must attribute to the unknowing of the beyond beingness itself—

<sup>1</sup> *Περὶ θεῶν ὀναμάτων*. This serves as an occasional book title in Neoplatonic literature. See Plato, *Cratylus* 401Bff. for the Platonic source of this phrase. Porphyry writes a work entitled *Περὶ θεῶν ὀναμάτων*. See Proclus, in *Remp.*, p. 32; in *Parm.* IV.40, VI.31; *Pl.Th.* I.29 for other references to τὰ θεῖα ὀνομάτα. The title also figures in writings on sorcery and theurgy; thus, Plutarch *de Is. et Os.* ch.61: ἐν δὲ ταῖς Ἑρμοῦ λεγομέναις βιβλοῖς ἱστοροῦσι περὶ τῶν ἱερῶν ὀναμάτων. (Koch, pp. 9,10)

<sup>2</sup> This work is non extant and is probably a literary fiction.

<sup>3</sup> Scriptural references for τὰ λόγια or τὸ λόγιον referring to specifically Christian writings are Rom. 3:2, Hebr. 5:12, I Pet. 4:11, Acts 7:38. However, Koch (see pp. 38-49) shows that τὰ λόγια, τὸ λόγιον, and τὰ ἱερα λογία (as well as θεολογία) do not refer only to Scripture but have a broad usage in Neoplatonism. It is for this reason that we translate these terms as "the writings," "the writing," and "the sacred writing." These terms often refer to the Scriptures but this is not always the case.

<sup>4</sup> I Cor. 2:4.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Proclus, *El. Th.* 123; in *Alcib.* II.141; in *Parm.* V.27; in *Crat.*, p. 87.

<sup>6</sup> On the connection of ἀγνώστος, κρυφίος, and ἔνωσις in Proclus see: in *Alcib.* II.82.174.334, IV.21; in *Parm.* II.216; *Pl. Th.* II.7. p. 96. Also, see St. Thomas, *De Pot* 10.4.12a; *S.T.* I.29.3.1a, 32.2.1a, 36.2.1a, 39.2.1a.

beyond logos, intellect, and being—a knowledge beyond being.<sup>7</sup> Once we refuse such [logos, intellect and being] in our ascent,<sup>8</sup> to the extent that the ray of the godhead freely gives of itself, we are drawn inward toward greater splendors by a temperance and piety for what is divine. For if it is necessary to have trust in the all-wise and most true theology, then what is divine uncovers itself and is inspected according to the analogy of each intellect.<sup>9</sup> For, in a saving justice the thearchic goodness appropriately separates its non-measuredness, as uncontained, from what is measured.

B

In the same way as what is intelligible is incomprehensible and unseen to the senses, and just as what is simple and formless is incomprehensible and unseen to what has shape and form, and just as the invisible and unstructured formlessness of what is bodiless is incomprehensible and unstructured to those who attend to what has been formed according to the structure of bodies, then according to the same logos of truth:

The indefiniteness beyond being  
lies beyond beings.<sup>10</sup>

The unity beyond intellect  
lies beyond intellect.

The one beyond thought is  
unintelligible to all thinking.<sup>11</sup>

The good beyond logos:  
ineffable to all logos  
unity unifying every unity  
being beyond being<sup>12</sup>  
non-intelligible intellect  
ineffable logos  
non-rationality  
non-intelligibility

<sup>7</sup> τῆς γὰρ ὑπὲρ λόγον καὶ νοῦν καὶ οὐσίαν αὐτῆς, ὑπερουσιότητος ἀγνωσία, αὐτῇ τὴν ὑπερουσίον ἐπιστήμην ἀναθετόν.

<sup>8</sup> τοσούτον ἐπὶ τὸ ἀνάντες ἀνανεύοντας. τοσούτον refers to the preceding λόγον καὶ νοῦν καὶ οὐσίαν.

<sup>9</sup> κατὰ τὴν ἀναλογίαν ἐκάστου τῶν νοῶν.

<sup>10</sup> ὑπέρκειται τῶν οὐσιῶν ἢ ὑπερουσίως ἀοριστία. The logos of truth more appropriately says: the indefiniteness beyond being (is) beyond being placed among beings. Similar remarks apply to the verb ὑπεριδρύω. Following customary usage we can translate it as “to found (establish) beyond.” But a more appropriate translation of this term when it is applied to the divinity would be “beyond being founded (established).”

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Proclus, in *Crat.*, p.33.

<sup>12</sup> ἢ ὑπερουσίως οὐσία.



non-nameability  
 be-ing according to no being  
 cause of *being* to all; but itself: non-be-ing,<sup>13</sup>  
 as it is beyond every being, and  
 So that it would properly and knowingly  
 manifest itself about itself.<sup>14</sup>

2

Thus, as has been said, we must neither dare to say—nor, clearly, to conceive—anything about the hidden divinity that is contrary to what has been divinely manifested to us in the sacred writings. For, as it has fittingly communicated about itself in the writing, the knowledge and contemplation of it, whatever it is, is inaccessible to all; for, it is apart from all beyond every manner of being.<sup>15</sup> You shall find that many theologians have celebrated it, not only as invisible and unencompassed, but also as at once unsearchable and untrackable; for, there is no path for those who penetrate into its infinite hiddenness.

Clearly, the good is not wholly unshared by any being. But, of itself, the founding ray beyond being is abidingly and fittingly revealed to the analogical illumination of each being. The good stretches forth the sacred intellects toward their desired contemplations of it, toward communion and likeness with it; they are sacredly thrown upon it as far as the divine law permits. Thus, they neither powerlessly vaunt themselves boldly against that which is more excellent than its harmoniously given theophanies, nor do they slip away in a descent from their inferiority to something worse. Rather, they are stretched forth steadfastly and unswervingly toward the ray which illumines them by the commensurate love for the illuminations which are permitted them. They are wisely and piously raised up with a sacred reverence as though on new wings.

3

When we follow these thearchic bonds which govern the splendid ordering of the super-celestial orders, and both when we honor the

<sup>13</sup> ἀλογία καὶ ἀνοησία καὶ ἀγνωμία, κατὰ μῆδεν τῶν ὄντων οὐσα καὶ αἴτιον τοῖς εἶναι πᾶσιν, αὐτὸ δὲ μὴ ὄν.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Proclus, in *Crat.*, p. 35, p. 36. Also, cf. St. Thomas, *De Spir. Creat.* 2.1a; S.T. I.12.2a, 88.2, 92.1.2a.

<sup>15</sup> ὡς πάντων ὑπερουσίως ἐξηρημένη. Cf. Proclus, in *Alcib.* II.240. ὑπερουσίως is literally translated as "beyond-beingly." Occasionally, we will use "beyond-beingly" instead of "beyond every manner of being." If one translates οὐσία as "entity," one might translate ὑπερουσίως as "transentitatively."

thearchic hiddenness beyond intellect and being by non-searching,<sup>16</sup> sacred, and reverent intellects and when we honor what is ineffable by a temperate silence, then we are lifted up to the bright light which wholly illumines us in the sacred writings. They guide us in their light toward the thearchic celebration; we are super-cosmically<sup>17</sup> illuminated by them. Thus, we are formed toward the sacred logos of celebration and toward seeing the thearchic light which is commensurately given to us by them.<sup>18</sup> Thus do we celebrate the good-giving source of every sacred manifestation of light<sup>19</sup> as it has bestowed itself in the sacred writings:

It alone is cause, source, being  
and life of all,  
A recalling and resurrecting of those who  
have fallen away from it,  
A renewal and re-formation of those who are  
slipping away toward a destruction of the  
divine form,  
A sacred foundation of those who are tossed about  
in an unholy tempest,  
A security against falling for those who  
stand upright,  
A guiding hand which is stretched out for  
those who are being led back to it,  
An illumination for those who are illumined,  
A source of completion for those  
who are completed,  
A god-source for those who are deified,  
A simplicity for those who are simplified,  
An unity for those who are unified,  
The source of every source  
beyond-beingly beyond every source,<sup>20</sup>  
And the good gift of what is hidden  
according to the divine law.  
To speak simply:  
It is the life of all that lives and  
the being of all beings,

<sup>16</sup> ἀνεξερεύντοις.

<sup>17</sup> ὑπερκοσμίως.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Proclus, *in. Crat.* p. 35, p.36.

<sup>19</sup> τὴν ἀγαθοδότην ἀρχὴν ἀπάσης ἱερὰς φωτοφανείας.

<sup>20</sup> ἀρχῆς ἀπάσης ὑπερουσίως ὑπεάρχιος ἀρχή.

The source and cause of every life and being,  
Through its goodness it brings forth and  
conserves beings in *being*.

4

We are initiated into these matters by the sacred writings. You shall find, as it were, that every sacred celebration of the theologians prepares, in a manifesting and celebrating way, the divine names with a view to the good-providing procession of the godhead.<sup>21</sup> For this reason, in nearly all theological matters, we shall see the godhead celebrated as:

—Monad and unity. This is on account of the simplicity and unity of its partlessness which is beyond nature.<sup>22</sup> From this, as a power of unification, we are super-cosmically unified and brought together into a divinely formed monad and divinely imitating unity from the folding together<sup>23</sup> of our divisibility and otherness.

—Trinity. This is the three-person<sup>24</sup> manifestation of the fecundity beyond being. From this all fatherhood in heaven and earth both is and is named.

—Cause of beings. For all have been brought forward into *being* through its being-producing goodness.

—Wise and beautiful. For all beings are preserved in what is incorruptible of their own nature and indeed are filled with every divine harmony and sacred good form.

The love of man of the godhead is also excellent. For, in harmony with truth, it has been wholly communicated to us in one of its three persons so that it recalls and raises human purposes to itself. From this the simple Jesus was ineffably composed; the everlasting received a temporal dimension and came to be equal in our nature with its unchanging and steady founding of those things which are fitting to it. Nevertheless, according to every nature, it exceeds every nature beyond every manner of being.

The hidden traditions of our divinely inspired leaders have given us many other theurgic lights which we have learned in harmony with the writings.<sup>25</sup> Now [in our present life] we analogously learn through the sacred veils of the human love of the writings<sup>26</sup> and of the hierarchic

<sup>21</sup> See St. Thomas, S.T. I.13.2.2a, II-II.91.1.1m.

<sup>22</sup> τὴν ἀπλότητα καὶ ἐνότητα τῆς ὑπερφανούς ἀμερίας.

<sup>23</sup> συμπτυσσομένων.

<sup>24</sup> τρισυπόστατον.

<sup>25</sup> See St. Thomas, S.T. III.2.3.3a.

<sup>26</sup> διὰ τῶν ἱερῶν παραπετασμάτων τῆς τῶν λογίων καὶ τῶν ἱεραρχιῶν παραδόσεων φιλανθρωπίας.

traditions. These hide both what is intelligible in what is sensible and what is beyond being in beings. These bestow form and shape to the formless and shapeless and multiply and break up the unstructured simplicity by a diversity of divisible symbols.

C Hereafter, when we have come to be indestructible and immortal and have attained a most blessed and Christ-like lot, "we shall" as the writings say, "be always with the Lord"<sup>27</sup> and shall be filled with his visible theophany in the holy contemplations which shall illumine us with the most brilliant splendors as the disciples were in that most divine transfiguration. We shall share in his intellectual gifts of light with a passionless and pure intellect. We shall share in the unity beyond intellect in the unknown and blessed radiations<sup>28</sup> of the rays that are beyond every light. Thus shall we be a more divine imitation of the super-celestial intellects. For, as the truth of writings say "we shall be equal to the angels and will be sons of God, by being sons of the resurrection."<sup>29</sup>

D But now, as far as is attainable by us, we employ the fitting symbols for what is divine; from these we are analogically lifted up to the simple and unified truth of the intellectual visions of God which are beyond our intellection of the divine ideas. Once we cease our intellectual activities, we are thrust upon the ray beyond being as far as  
593 A the divine law permits. In this ray the limits of all knowledge have pre-subsisted<sup>30</sup> in a more than ineffable way. It is not possible to conceive, to speak, or in any way to contemplate this ray; for, it is apart from all, beyond unknowing, and at once the completing ends of all essential knowledge and powers. It has anticipated, beyond every manner of being, all in itself and is founded beyond all the super-celestial intellects by its unencompassed powers.<sup>31</sup> For if all knowledge is of beings and has its limits in beings, then that beyond every being is apart from every knowledge.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>27</sup> I. Thess. 4.17.

<sup>28</sup> *ἐπιβολαίς*. The word *ἐπιβολή* is not used by Plato and is only rarely used by Plotinus. However, it occurs frequently in Proclus and Pseudo-Dionysius. It is frequently used in the sense of *ἐπαφή*. See Proclus, in *Parm.* V.33; in *Crat.* p. 48, p. 115. (Koch, p. 173)

<sup>29</sup> Luke 20:36. Also, see St. Thomas, *S.T.* I.58.3c.

<sup>30</sup> *προϋφέστηκεν*. This term is more appropriately understood as "before having subsisted." Thus we might translate the phrase as: "before subsisting, the limits of all knowledge are in this ray . . ."

<sup>31</sup> See St. Thomas, *S.T.* I.56.3.1a.

<sup>32</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Ver.* 8.1.1a.

Yet, clearly, if it is superior to every logos and every knowledge of it, if it is wholly established beyond intellect and being—be-ing a comprehending, a gathering, and a unifying of all, and before the gathering of all—and if it is wholly incomprehensible to all, such that there is neither sensation, imagination, opinion, name, logos, touch, or knowledge of it,<sup>33</sup> how is the logos about the divine names to be examined by us? For we have shown that the divinity beyond being is incomprehensible and beyond all names.<sup>34</sup>

B

But this is just what we said when we set forth our *Outlines of Theology*: it is not possible to conceive the one, the unknown, the good itself beyond being which is itself, as I affirm, the triadic unity, the god-like and the good-like.<sup>35</sup> Indeed, even the angelically appropriate unions of the holy power, which we speak of as emissions or receptions of the goodness beyond all unknowing and light, are ineffable and unknowable; they come to be only in those angels who are beyond angelic knowledge and are deemed to have need of them.<sup>36</sup>

The divinely formed intellects—which are unified by way of imitating angels as far as possible (for it is in ceasing all intellectual activities that such a union emerges among such consecrated intellects as come to be engaged in the light unity beyond god)<sup>37</sup>—celebrate it most fittingly through the denial of all beings. As a result of their most blessed union they truly and brilliantly illuminate this:

C

It is cause of all;  
but itself: nothing  
as beyond-beingly apart from all.<sup>38</sup>

To none of those who are lovers of the truth beyond every truth is it permissible to celebrate the thearchic-beyond-beingness, whatever is the beyond-source beyond goodness,<sup>39</sup> as logos, power, intellect, life,

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Proclus, *El. Th.* 123; in *Parm.* 54 sq.; *Pl. Th.* II,11, p. 111.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Proclus, *El. Th.* 129,135,160. Also, see St. Thomas, *De Ver.* 8.1.1.a; S.T. I12.1.1a, 13.1.1a, 105.2.1a.

<sup>35</sup> τὴν ὁμόθεον καὶ ὁμοάγαθον.

<sup>36</sup> ἡξιωμένοις. The logos of each being determines what each being needs or what is due to each being.

<sup>37</sup> πρὸς τὸ ὑπέρθεον φῶς ἔνωσις. See Proclus, *El. Th.* 129, 135, 160.

<sup>38</sup> ὅτι πάντων μὲν ἐστὶ τῶν ὄντων αἰτίον, αὐτὸ δὲ οὐδὲν ὡς πάντων ὑπερουσίως ἐξηρημένον.

<sup>39</sup> τὴν μὲν οὖν ὑπερουσιότητα τὴν θεαρχικὴν, ὃ τί ποτέ ἐστιν ἢ τῆς ὑπεραγαθότητος ὑπερύπαρξις.

or being. For it is preeminently removed<sup>10</sup> from everything whatsoever that is be-ing: from every habit, motion, life, imagination, opinion, name, logos, thinking, intellection, being, rest, foundation, unity, limit, and non-limit.

D Yet since it is cause of all by its *being* (as source of goodness), it is necessary to celebrate the good-source-providence of the godhead<sup>11</sup> in relation to the totality of what is caused:

All are about it and for the sake of it,  
It is before all,  
All have been brought together in it,  
It is the bringing forth of all and  
what stands under<sup>12</sup> all,  
All desire it:  
the intellectual and rational  
in a knowing way,  
what is inferior to these  
in a sensible way, and  
all others, according to their  
habituated capacity for a living  
or merely existing motion.<sup>13</sup>

## 6

596 A Seeing this, the theologians celebrate it as nameless and in accordance with all names. Thus, they call it nameless when the godhead itself, in one of the mystical sights of the symbolic manifestation of God, rebukes him who says "What is thy name?"<sup>14</sup> by saying "To what end do you ask my name, for it is the most wondrous of all?"<sup>15</sup> and leads him away from a knowledge of the divine names. For is not this truly the most wondrous name: the nameless beyond all names,<sup>16</sup> which is placed beyond "every name which is named either in this age or in the future?"<sup>17</sup>

<sup>10</sup> ὑπεροχικῶς ἀφῆρημέων. Cf. Proclus, in *Parm.* 215. τὸ θεοῦ πάντα κατὰ τίνα ὑπεροχὴν ἐξηρημένην καὶ ἀφραστον.

<sup>11</sup> τὴν ἀγαθαρχικὴν τῆς θεαρχίας προνοίαν.

<sup>12</sup> ὑπόστασις.

<sup>13</sup> See Proclus, *El. Th.* 39,145; *de dec. dub.* I.118. Also see St. Thomas S.T. I.5.2.1m, 13.6.2.a, II-II.13.1c, 101.3.2m, 106.3c.

<sup>14</sup> αὐτὴ ἡ θεαρχία.

<sup>15</sup> Jud. 13:17-18.

<sup>16</sup> τὸ ὑπὲρ πᾶν ὄνομα, τὸ ἀνώνυμον, cf. Philip 2:9, which speaks in reference to Christ and omits mention of "nameless."

<sup>17</sup> Ephes. 1:21.

Yet they do give it many names and introduce it as: "I am who am,"<sup>48</sup> "life," "light," "God," and "truth." Those who are wise of God themselves celebrate the cause of all beings in terms of the totality of what is caused and with many names: "good," "beautiful," "wise," "beloved," "God of gods," "Lord of lords," "Holy of holies," "age," "be-ing," "cause of every age," "leader of life," "wisdom," "intellect," "logos," "knower," "beyond having the treasure of every knowledge," "power," "empowered," "King of those who are ruled," "Ancient of days," "not aging and unchanging," "savior," "justice," "sanctification," "redemption," "surpassing all in greatness," "in the still small breeze." And, further, they say that it is in intellects, in souls, in bodies, in the heaven and in the earth and at one and the same time in itself, in the cosmos, around the cosmos, beyond the cosmos, beyond the heaven, and beyond being. It is named "sun," "air," "fire," "water," "spirit," "dew," "cloud," "a stone itself," and "a rock": all beings, yet nothing among beings.

B

C

7

Thus, both nameless and all the names of beings befit the cause of all, be-ing beyond all, precisely so that it would be king of all and all would be about it—being raised to it as cause, source, and limit—and so that it would be "all in all"<sup>49</sup> as the writings say. Thus, we truly celebrate it to be the support, source of guidance, connection, completion, protection and hearth<sup>50</sup> of all, and as reverting [all] to itself. [It accomplishes] these in a unified, immeasurable, and excellent way. For it is not only the cause of connection, of life, or of completion such that the goodness beyond name would be named from one or another of its providences. Rather, it has anticipated the all simply and infinitely in itself: the all complete goodness of its one and all causing

D

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<sup>48</sup> Exod. 3:14. (Note that the apprehension of God as "I am who am" belongs to affirmative and not negative (mystical) theology.) Many of the following names have reference to Scripture, for which see Rolt, pp. 61-2.

<sup>49</sup> I Cor. 15:28.

<sup>50</sup> *Έστία*. The source of Plato is Crat. 401c/d where Socrates gives two sources of the word: 1) an Eleatic sense which stresses stability—τὸ τῆς οὐσίας μετέχον or τὴν παντῶν οὐσίῳ (έστία = έστια = οὐσία); 2) an Heraclitean sense, as τὸ ὄθον (έστία = ὥστια), in this sense έστια brings all things into movement and flux. The sense of stability prevails in Proclus and Ps-Dionysius. Frequently one finds both authors using έστία in the sense of φρουρά. Yet, also, the divine stability is the bringing forth of beings into be-ing and motion. For Proclus, see in *Tim.* 281E, p. 681; *El.Th.* 154, 156; in *Alcib.* II,190; in *Parm.* V,163, VI,193,243; in *Remp.* p. 38, 62. For Dionysius see *D.N.* I.7, IV.1, VII.4, IV.2, IV.7, II.2 (Koch, pp. 228-229).

providence. Thus, it is to be harmoniously celebrated and named in terms of all beings.<sup>51</sup>

8

Indeed, not only do the theologians worship those divine names which are drawn from either its complete or particular providences or from those for which it has provided, but these names are also drawn from certain divine visions which have in some way illuminated the initiates and the prophets in the sacred places or elsewhere. Hence, they name the beyond brilliant and beyond named goodness according to one cause and power after another. Thus, too, they bestow upon it human, fiery, or amber forms and shapes; they celebrate its ears, hair, faces, hands, wings, feathers, arms, backparts, and feet. They form around it a crown, throne, cup and mixing bowl and certain other mystical things. We have discussed all of these according to our powers in our work entitled *Symbolic Theology*.<sup>52</sup>

But now, collecting those parts of the holy writings which are important for the present inquiry, and employing what has been so far said as a canon—thus we make our inquiry with respect to them—let us proceed to the unfolding of the intelligible divine names as the hierarchic law demands of every theology. By a thinking which seeks the divine, we shall become initiated. With sacred ears, we shall take up the unfolding of the sacred divine names. We shall establish what is holy in those who are holy in accordance with the divine tradition. We shall remove them from the laughter and mockery of the uninitiated and, if there are such persons as these uninitiated ones, we shall purify them from their war against God. You then, dear Timothy, observe these according to the hierarchic guidance and do not speak of them [the divine names] nor make them known to the uninitiated.

Let God grant that I may celebrate in a fitting way the many-named good works of the incomprehensible and nameless divinity. May he not remove the logos of truth from my mouth.

<sup>51</sup> See St. Thomas, *S.T.* I.57.1c, I-II.79.1c. For the entire section from *D.N.* I.5.593B11 to this point see, St. Thomas, *De Pot.* 7.5c.2m, 9.7c; *De Malo* 5.1.4m, 16.8.3m; *S.T.* I.84.7.3m, II-II.27.4c.

<sup>52</sup> This work is not extant and as such is probably a literary fiction. However, Ps.-Dionysius' *Ninth Letter* contains much that is relevant to the subject matter of the work. According to Koch (p.10), Proclus mentions that he has a work with this title in *in Remp.* p. 59.



## CHAPTER II

### CONCERNING UNIFIED AND DIFFERENTIATED THEOLOGY AND WHAT THE DIVINE UNITY AND DIVINE DIFFERENCE IS

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#### 1

In conformity with the writings, we are to celebrate the whole thearchic constitution<sup>1</sup>—whatever the manifesting and determining goodness is itself. For what else is one to learn from the sacred writings when it declares what the godhead itself, who leads the way, says: “Why do you ask me about the good, for no one else is good except God alone”<sup>2</sup>? Now we have already demonstrated and discussed this in other places: the writings always celebrate the appropriate divine names not partially but of the whole, all-complete, wholly complete, and full divinity. Thus, all of these are to be attributed absolutely, wholly, and unreservedly to the entire wholeness of the wholly complete and entire divinity.<sup>3</sup>

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As we have been reminded in the *Outlines of Theology*, if someone declares that this celebration is not about the whole divinity, then in a boldness contrary to the divine law, he blasphemes and cleaves asunder the one beyond unity. We must, then, declare that this celebration is about the entire divinity. For, the good-formed Logos itself declares: “I am good”<sup>4</sup>; a certain one among the God-spoken prophets celebrates the Spirit as the good.<sup>5</sup> It also says “I am who am.”<sup>6</sup> If some one says that this is not celebrated of the whole divinity and thus violently limits it to one aspect, how will he understand this: “He who is, who was, and who is to come (the Almighty) says these things,”<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> τὴν θεαρχικὴν ὅλην ὑπαρξιν.

<sup>2</sup> Luke 18:19.

<sup>3</sup> ἀπάσῃ τῇ ὁλότῃ τῆς ὀλοτελοῦς καὶ πάσης θεότητος.

<sup>4</sup> John 10:11.

<sup>5</sup> See Ps. 143:10.

<sup>6</sup> Exod. 3:14.

<sup>7</sup> Rev. 1:8.

"You are the same,"<sup>8</sup> and "The Spirit of truth is that which has gone forth from the Father"<sup>9</sup>?

B If one affirms that the thearchic life is not whole, how then is the sacred discourse true which says: "Just as the Father awakes and produces life in the dead, so the Son gives life to those whom he will,"<sup>10</sup> and "Thus the Spirit is the producer of life"<sup>11</sup>? Since the whole divinity is lord over the whole, then, as I believe it is not possible concerning the theogonic divinity or sonship to say how many times the writings about God attribute the name of "Lord" to the Father and the Son. Indeed, even the Spirit is Lord.

Further, "beautiful" and "wise" are celebrated of the whole divinity. Indeed, "light," "divine production," "cause," and all else that refers to the whole godhead conducts the writings to the celebration of the godhead. The writings do this comprehensively when they say that "All are from God,"<sup>12</sup> but thoroughly when they say that "All things were made through Him"<sup>13</sup> and that "All are contained in Him"<sup>14</sup> and that "You shall send forth your Spirit and they shall become established."<sup>15</sup> Further, to speak summarily, the thearchic logos itself says "I and the Father are one,"<sup>16</sup> "All that have the Father are mine,"<sup>17</sup>

C and "All that is mine is yours, and all of yours is mine."<sup>18</sup>

Moreover, the logos attributes in a common and unified way all that pertains to the Father and Himself to the Spirit: the divine works, reverence, source, uneclipsed causality, and distribution of fitting gifts. And I do not imagine that any of those who have been raised in an undistorted conception of the divine writings will speak against this: all that is suitable to the good is to be attributed to the whole godhead according to the completely divine logos. So, since we have now partially and briefly, but more sufficiently in other places, discussed and demonstrated all these things in reference to the writings, we shall now attempt to unfold every divine name of whatever sort so that it must be understood as referring to the whole divinity itself.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Ps. 101:28.

<sup>9</sup> John 15:26.

<sup>10</sup> John 5:21.

<sup>11</sup> John 6:63.

<sup>12</sup> I Cor. 11:12.

<sup>13</sup> Colos. 1:16.

<sup>14</sup> Colos. 1:17.

<sup>15</sup> Ps. 103:30.

<sup>16</sup> John 10:30.

<sup>17</sup> John 16:15.

<sup>18</sup> John 17:10.

<sup>19</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Ver.* 4.5.4a.

But if someone shall say that we are introducing a confusion into what we do which is contrary to the divinely showing division, we do not imagine that such a statement is sufficient to persuade us; further, it is not true. For if someone be wholly opposed to the writings, he will be entirely opposed to our philosophy. If he has no regard for the wisdom of God which is in the writings, how will we care for his guidance in theological knowledge? But if he heeds the truth of the writings, then to our ability we will proceed to our defence with their truth as a canon and light, and we shall unswervingly go forth in our argument to maintain that the writings about God lead us to regard some things as unified and others as differentiated.<sup>20</sup> Further, it is not permissible either to divide what is unified or to confound what is differentiated. Rather, following it according to our power we are to be lifted up to the divine splendors. By receiving the divine revelations from the writings as the most beautiful canon of truth, we hasten to protect those which are founded there in themselves and which are the most simple, undiminished, and unchanged. We are protected in our protection of the writings; we are enabled to be protected by the writings by our protection of them.<sup>21</sup>

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## 3

As we have pointed out in the *Outlines of Theology*, through many examples from the writings, what is to be unified in respect of the whole divinity is beyond-good, beyond-god, beyond-being, beyond-wisdom, beyond-life, and whatever else is of the pre-eminent denial.<sup>22</sup> Also unified is everything pertaining to causality: good, beauty, being, life, genesis, wisdom, and whatever else has reference to the good-formed gifts of the divinity by which the cause of all goods is named.

What is said to be differentiated is the beyond-being name and "thing named"<sup>23</sup> of the Father, Son and Spirit; no exchange or commonness is to be introduced into these. In addition, the all-complete

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<sup>20</sup> ὡς ἡ θεολογία τὰ μὲν ἡνωμένως παραδίδωσι, τὰ δὲ διακεκριμένως.

<sup>21</sup> See St. Thomas, S.T. I.32.1c, II-II.5.2m.

<sup>22</sup> ὅσα τῆς ὑπεροχικῆς ἔστιν ἀφαιρέσεως. We might also translate this as: whatever else is of the denial beyond all having. For, ὑπεροχικῆς derives from ὑπερέχω literally translated as "beyond-having."

<sup>23</sup> χρῆμα. The tension between ὄνομα and χρῆμα is that between a name and what is named. Τὰ ἡνωμένα and τὰ διακεκριμένα are not simply "unified names" and "differenced names." For it is the name and "thing" (χρᾶμα) which is unified or differenced. Hence, we have translated these as "what is unified" and "what is differentiated (differenced)."

and unchanged constitution of our Jesus as well as all that which refers to the essential mystery of his love for man is said to be differentiated.<sup>24</sup>

4

D But, as I imagine, it is necessary that we begin again to explain the completeness of the divine unity and difference so that the meaning of all of our statements will be clear. Thus we must reject all of the various unwise things which are said, and we must wisely and systematically take up what is proper in this matter, as far as we are able. For as I have said elsewhere, the sacred mystics of our theological traditions call the divine unities the hidden and non-wandering supreme foundations of the more than ineffable and more than unknown steadfastness.<sup>25</sup> But they call the divine differences the good-formed processions and manifestations of the godhead.<sup>26</sup> Further, in accordance with the sacred writings, they declare that there are specific unions and differences which are peculiar to either the unions or differences that have been spoken about.

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Thus with respect to the divine unity or beyond-beingness, this is one with and common to the authoritative Trinity:

Ground beyond being,  
Divinity beyond god,  
Goodness beyond good,  
Sameness beyond all of the whole  
    individualness which is beyond all,  
Unity beyond source of unity,  
Ineffable, many named,  
Unknowing, completely unintelligible,  
Position of all, denial of all,  
    Beyond all position and denial.  
(If one must say:)  
The abiding and foundation  
    of the ruling persons in one another,  
    wholly beyond every way of unity, and  
    confused in none of its parts.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>24</sup> See St. Thomas, *Quod*. IV.4.1.1a; S.T. I.45.6, III.3.4.

<sup>25</sup> τὰς τῆς ὑπερarrήτου καὶ ὑπεραγνώστου μονότητος κρυφίας καὶ ἀνεκφοιτήτους ὑπεριδρύσεις.

<sup>26</sup> τὰς ἀγαθοπρεπείας τῆς θεαρχίας προόδους τε καὶ ἐκφάνσεις.

<sup>27</sup> οἷον ἐπὶ τῆς ἐνώσεως τῆς θείας ἥτοι τῆς ὑπερουσιότητος, ἡνωμένον μὲν ἐστὶ τῇ ἐναρχικῇ Τριάδι, καὶ κοινόν ἢ ὑπερούσιος ὑπαρξίς, ἢ ὑπέρθεος θεότης, ἢ ὑπεράγαθος ἀγαθότης, (ἢ) ἀπάντων ἐπέκεινα τῆς ἐπέκεινα πάντων ὅλης ιδιότητος

Let us exemplify [this unconfused founding of the ruling persons in one another] by a sensible and familiar example. The lights of lamps which are in one room are whole and completely together in penetrating one another, yet they have an unmixed and precise distinction which lets them subsist apart from one another; they are unified in their difference and differenced in their unity. Thus, in a room which is full of many single lights we will see a light unifying all the lights into one light which is one, clear, undifferentiated illumination. And, I imagine, no one will be able to distinguish the light of this lamp from the light of the others from out of the air which encompasses all these lights. Further, he will not be able to see one light without the others among the totality of lights which are purely mixed with one another.

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But if some lamp is taken out of the room all its light will be carried out with it; it will draw nothing of the other lights into itself, nor will it abandon its light to the others. For, as was said, there was a wholly unmixed union of the totality of these lights in a complete whole such that there was no confusion of their own aspects. This, in truth, occurred in a body in which the light itself was dependent upon the material fire.

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Thus, we say that the unity beyond being is founded not only beyond bodily unities but even beyond the unity of the soul and intellect. For, as a whole, the divinely formed and super-celestial lights have their unity in a pure, whole, and super-cosmic way according to their analogous participations in the unity which is apart from all.<sup>28</sup>

## 5

The difference in the theologies beyond being is not only what I have said—namely, that each of the persons of the godhead is purely and unconfusedly founded in the unity itself—but that none of those which pertain to the theogonies beyond being<sup>29</sup> turn against one another. Now the Father is the abiding source of the divinity beyond being. The Father is not the Son and the Son is not the Father. Thus, our celebration religiously guards what is proper to each of the persons of the godhead. All of these things that we have so far discussed

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ταυτότης, ἡ ὑπερ ἐναρχίαν ἐνότης, τὸ ἀφθεγον, τὸ πολύφωνον, ἡ ἀγνωσία, τὸ παννόητον, ἡ πάντων θέσις, ἡ πάντων ἀφαίρεσις. τὸ ὑπὲρ πᾶσαν καὶ θέσιν καὶ ἀφαίρεσιν, ἡ ἐν ἀλλήλαις, εἰ οὕτω χρή φάναι, τῶν ἐναρχικῶν ὑποστασέων, μονή, καὶ ἰδρυσις, ὀλικῶς ὑπερηνωμένη, καὶ οὐδενὶ μέρει συγκεχυμένη.

<sup>28</sup> See St. Thomas, S.T. I.67.2.3a.

<sup>29</sup> τὰ τῆς ὑπερουσίου θεογονίας.

are the unities and differences in the ineffable unity<sup>30</sup> and ground.<sup>31</sup>

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But if the divine difference is the good-showing procession of the divine unity which, beyond every way of unity, both makes itself many and multiplies itself by goodness, then these are the unities in this divine difference: the incomprehensible traditions, the gifts of being, the gifts of life,<sup>32</sup> and the production of wisdom and all the other gifts of the cause of the goodness of all, according to which the unparticipants are celebrated from the participations [in them] and those which participate [in them].<sup>33</sup> Now this is common, a unity, and one for the whole divinity: it is participated in wholly and entirely by all those participating in it, and none participate in only a part of it.<sup>34</sup>

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In the same way, the point in the middle of a circle is [able to be participated in] by all of the straight lines in the circle which lie about it. In the same way, the many impressions of a seal share in the original form of the seal; for, in each of the impressions there is a participation in the whole, same seal and in no impression is there a participation merely of a part [of the seal]. Nevertheless, the non-participation of the all-causing divinity<sup>35</sup> lies beyond all, since there is no contact with it nor any communion or commingling with it by those which participate in it.<sup>36</sup>

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Nevertheless, someone will say that the seal is not the whole and the same in the totality of its impressions. The seal is not the cause of this, for it freely gives all of itself in a single and identical way to each impression. The dissimilarity of the difference<sup>37</sup> of those participating in it is what produces the dissolution and removal of the one whole and identical archetype. For instance, if what is to be impressed is simple, impressionable, smooth, and without character such that it is neither hard, nor resistant, nor able to be melted or unstable, the imprint [it receives] will be clear, plain, and permanent. But if what is to be impressed lacks the capabilities which we have mentioned,

<sup>30</sup> Concerning ἡ ἀφθεγτων ἑνωσι in Proclus see in *Parm.* V.313, VI.14, VI.177; *Pl.Th.* I.21, p. 54.

<sup>31</sup> ἵπαρξις see Proclus, in *Crat.* pp. 57, 58, 65, 89.

<sup>32</sup> αἱ οὐσιώσεις, αἱ ζωώσεις. Literally, the givings (makings) of being, the givings (makings) of life. See *D.N.* XI.7 where αὐτὸ τὸ εἶναι is called ἡ οὐσιώσις.

<sup>33</sup> καθ' ἃς ἐκ τῶν μετοχῶν καὶ τῶν μετεχόντων ὑμνείται τὰ ἀμεθέκτως μετεχομένα.

<sup>34</sup> τὸ πᾶσαν αὐτὴν ὅλην ὑφ' ἐκάστου τῶν μετεχόντων μετέλεσθαι, καὶ ὑπ' οὐδενὸς οὐδενὶ μέρει. See St. Thomas, *S.T.* I.73.2c.

<sup>35</sup> ἡ τῆς παναιτίου θεότητος ἀμεθεξία.

<sup>36</sup> See St. Thomas, *S.C.G.* I.26.246; *S.T.* I.3.8.sc.

<sup>37</sup> ἡ δὲ τῶν μετεχόντων διαφορότης ἀνόμοια.

this will be the cause of its lack of participation in the seal, its formlessness and non-clarity, and everything else which arises from its inability to participate in the seal.

Further, the logos beyond being, which truly and wholly has taken on being among us and according to us, was differentiated in the good-showing theurgy among us and was given to suffer those aspects of its human theurgy which were selected and exalted. For the Father and the Spirit had no share in these according to any logos, unless one were to say that they shared in its good-showing and philanthropic intentions in accordance with the exalted and ineffable theurgy which the unchangeable, as God and Word of God, had accomplished when it was among us. Thus in our discourse we strive to unify and differentiate those which are divine even as these themselves are unified and differentiated.<sup>38</sup>

7

In our *Outlines of Theology* we have explicated, as far as possible, all those causes of these unions and differences that we have found in the divinely-showing writings,<sup>39</sup> by treating what is peculiar to each. We interpreted some of these [causes] by our discourse such that we have led the sacred and unpolluted intellect to the manifest visions of the writings and are raised up to a revolving about the true logos. However, we are thrust upon some [causes] that are mystical in the divine bestowal which is beyond intellectual activity.

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For what is divine and everything which is manifested to us are known by their participations alone. But these—whatever they are in their proper source and foundation—are beyond intellect and beyond all being and knowledge.<sup>40</sup> Thus, if we would name the hiddenness beyond being either “God,” or “being,” or “life,” or “light,” or “logos,” we would understand nothing other than the powers—whether being producing, life producing or wisdom producing—which are brought forward out of it into us. But when we thrust ourselves upon this hiddenness in freeing ourselves from every intellectual activity, then shall we see no deification, life, or being which precisely resembles the cause apart from all in every preeminence.<sup>41</sup>

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Again, we have been instructed by the sacred writings that the Father is the God-source and that Jesus and Spirit are god-growing and (as it were) full-blown off-shoots and, as it were, flowers of the

<sup>38</sup> See St. Thomas, S.T. III.14.1a,1m.

<sup>39</sup> ἐν τοῖς λόγοις θεοπρεπείς.

<sup>40</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Ver.* 4.7c.

<sup>41</sup> τῇ πάντων ἐξηρημένη κατὰ πᾶσαν ὑπεροχὴν αἴτια.

theogonic divinity and lights beyond being.<sup>42</sup> Yet, it is not possible either to speak or to think how these are.<sup>43</sup>

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C Every power of our intellectual activity extends only this far, since every divine fatherhood and sonship is given both to us and to the super-celestial powers from the fatherhood and sonship which is apart from all. From this, the divinely formed intellects have come to be and are named gods, sons of gods, and fathers of gods. Clearly, such fatherhood and sonship are spiritually—that is, incorporeally, immaterially, and intellectually—perfected. For the Spirit of the godhead is beyond what is founded beyond every immaterial and deified intellection, and the Son and Father are preeminently apart from every divine sonhood and fatherhood.<sup>44</sup>

D For there is no precise relation between causes and what is caused. Rather, what is caused has achieved an image of its causes, and the causes themselves are both apart from and founded beyond what they cause according to the logos of their own proper source.<sup>45</sup> Thus, to employ familiar paradigms: pleasures and pains are said to be the causes of what is pleasant or painful but pleasures and pains are themselves neither pleased nor pained. So too, the fire which heats and burns is not itself said to be heated or burned. Hence, if someone says that life itself lives or that light itself is lit, he does not speak rightly according to my discourse unless he speaks according to another character: what pertains to what is caused “exists” beforehand abundantly and essentially in its causes.<sup>46</sup>

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648 A Further, the god formation of Jesus, which is revealed in every theology, is ineffable to every logos and unknowable to every intellect, even to those of the most honored among the highest angels. We have mystically accepted his having taken on being in a human way. We are ignorant of how he came to be formed of a maiden’s blood by any

<sup>42</sup> See Proclus, *de mal. sub.* L.214.

<sup>43</sup> See Proclus, *Pl.Th.* II.6.p.9, II.10.p.109.

<sup>44</sup> τοῦ θεαρχικοῦ Πνεύματος, ὑπὲρ πᾶσαν νοητὰν αὐλίαν καὶ θέωσιν ὑπεριδρυσμένον, καὶ τοῦ Πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ, πάσης πατριᾶς καὶ υἱότητος θείας ὑπεροχικῶς ἐξηρημένων. See St. Thomas, *De Pot.* 10.4.1a; *De Malo* 16.9.6m.

<sup>45</sup> See Proclus, *de dec. dub.* I.118, I.101; *El.Th.* 98; *Pl.Th.* V.39. p. 333. See St. Thomas *De Ver.* 7.7.1a, 21.4.4m; *S.T.* I.93.2.1a.

<sup>46</sup> περισσῶς καὶ οὐσιωδῶς πρόένεστι τὰ τῶν αἰτιατῶν τοῖς αἰτίοις. We might also render this: “before be-ing, what pertains to what is caused is in its causes.”



other law than that of nature, and of how he walked over unstable water with dry feet while he himself had bodily mass and material weight. We are ignorant of all those other deeds indicative of the natural logos of Jesus which is beyond nature.<sup>47</sup>

Yet we have discussed these matters sufficiently in other places, and they have been celebrated beyond every natural manner by our illustrious teacher in his work entitled *Theological Elements*.<sup>48</sup> Not only did he learn of these matters—which he either received from the sacred theologians, or discovered from the knowledgeable sayings in the writings, or from his many exercises and activities in these matters, or from more divinely inspired conceptions—but he also experienced these divine things. Further (if it is necessary to say this) by his sympathy to these matters he found completion in an untaught and mystical union with and belief of them. And so that the many and blessed teachings of his most clear thinking may be seen in the fewest possible words, we have here included these texts about Jesus which are found in his *Theological Elements*.<sup>49</sup>

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10

*From the "Theological Elements"  
of the most holy Hierotheus*

C

The cause and fullness of all is  
the divinity of Jesus:  
An ordering of consonant parts to wholeness;  
it is neither whole nor part.  
Whole and part as anticipating, beyond having, and  
before-having every whole and part in itself.<sup>50</sup>  
A completion to the non-complete as  
source of completion,  
Non-complete to the complete as  
beyond completion and before completion.  
Form producing form in those without form as  
source of form,  
Non-form in those which are formed as  
beyond form.

<sup>47</sup> τὰ ἄλλα ὅσα τῆς ὑπερφνοῦς ἐστὶν Ἰησοῦ φυσιολογίας.

<sup>48</sup> τὰ θεολογικὰ στοιχειώσεις. Proclus has a major work with an identical title. The character of Hierotheus is probably a fiction.

<sup>49</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Ver.* 26.3.19a; *S.T.* I.8.3m, I-II.22.3.1a, II-II.45.2c, 97.22m

<sup>50</sup> ὅλον καὶ μέρος, ὡς πᾶν καὶ μέρος καὶ ὅλον ἐν αὐτῇ συνειληφία, καὶ ὑπερέχουσα, καὶ προέχουσα.

Being<sup>51</sup> undefiledly taking a stand upon the  
 totality of being;  
 Beyond-being: apart from every being.<sup>52</sup>  
 A determining of the totality of principles and orders;  
 Yet, founded beyond every principle and order.  
 The measure of what is.  
 Eternity, before eternity, and beyond eternity.  
 Fullness in those which lack;  
 Beyond fullness in those which are full.  
 Ineffable and unspeakable,  
 D Beyond intellect, beyond life, and beyond being.  
 That beyond nature: beyond-naturally,  
 That beyond being: beyond-beingly.<sup>53</sup>

649 A Whence, although it had come to our nature by its love for man  
 and had truly been given being and had been called man—and may  
 what is celebrated beyond reason and intellect be propitious toward  
 us<sup>54</sup>—it is that beyond nature and beyond being. It is this not only  
 insofar as it has steadfastly and unconfusedly communicated with us,  
 suffering nothing in its exceeding fullness by its ineffable emptying  
 [out of itself], but also in that the newest of all those that are new are  
 beyond nature in respect of our nature and beyond being in respect  
 of those in being: beyond-having all that is ours, from us, [and]  
 beyond us.<sup>55</sup>

# 11

B We have sufficiently discussed these matters. We shall now proceed  
 to the goal of our discourse by unfolding the common and unified  
 names of the divine difference as far as we can. So that we may deter-  
 mine these names in a clear and regular way from the start we shall  
 maintain, as we have already said, that the divine difference is the  
 good-showing processions of the godhead.

It is differenced in a unified way:  
 being given to all beings

<sup>51</sup> οὐσία.

<sup>52</sup> ὑπερουσίος, ἀπάσης οὐσίας ἐξηρημένη. This sentence clarifies the sense of  
 “being beyond being” (οὐσία ὑπερουσίος) at 588B.

<sup>53</sup> ὑπερφνωῶς ἔχει τὸ ὑπερφνὲς, ὑπερουσίως τὸ ὑπερουσίον. ὑπερφνωῶς might also  
 be rendered “beyond every way of nature.”

<sup>54</sup> ἴλεω δὲ εἶη τὰ πρὸς ἡμῶν τὰ ὑπερ νοῦν καὶ λόγον ὑμνούμενα. The intention of  
 this is unclear.

<sup>55</sup> πάντα τὰ ἡνῶν ἐξ ἡμῶν ὑπὲρ ἡμᾶς ὑπερέχων.

overflowing the participations of the  
totality of those that are good,  
singly made many,  
non-wanderingly multiplied out of the one.<sup>56</sup>  
Since God is beyond-beingly be-ing,<sup>57</sup> and as  
*being* is given to beings and  
brings forth the totality of beings,<sup>58</sup>  
That one be-ing is said to be multiplied by  
the bringing forth of all beings out of itself.

It abides

not less than itself,  
one in its manifoldness,  
unified in its procession,  
full in its difference,

By its beyond-beingly apartness from beings,<sup>59</sup>  
its single bringing up of the whole, and <sup>60</sup>  
the undiminished flowing of its  
undiminished gifts.

C

Be-ing one<sup>61</sup>

it has bestowed unity to every part and whole,  
and every unity and multitude;  
As beyond-beingly one in the same way,<sup>62</sup> and  
not a part of a multitude,  
not a whole of parts;  
it is not one,  
does not partake in the one, and  
does not have the one.

Far away from these, a one:

beyond the one in beings,  
a partless multitude,  
unfilled and beyond full,  
completing and binding together  
every unity and multitude.

<sup>56</sup> ἡνωμενῶς μὲν διακρίνεται, πληθύνεται δὲ ἐνικῶς, καὶ πολλαπλασιάζεται ἐκ τοῦ ἑνὸς ἀνεκφοιτητῶς.

<sup>57</sup> ἐπειδὴ ὧν ἔστιν ὁ θεὸς ὑπερουσίως.

<sup>58</sup> οὐσίαι.

<sup>59</sup> ὑπερουσίως ἐξηρημένον. (By its separation from all beyond every manner of being.)

<sup>60</sup> See Proclus, *de dec. dub.* I.118, I.101; *El. Th.* 98; *Pl. Th.* V.39.p.333.

<sup>61</sup> ἐν ὧν.

<sup>62</sup> ἐν ἔστιν ὡσαύτως ὑπερουσίως.

Further, since many gods have emerged by the deification which is derived from it, in which they are divinely formed according to the power of each, there seems to be and is and is said to be a multiplication and difference of the one God. But the god-source beyond god is, beyond every manner of being, not less one god as indivisible in those which are divisible in a unity to itself, and simply and unmixed in the many.<sup>63</sup>

D

Indeed, in his divine enlightenment, the common leader of us and our teacher (who, as the light of the world, is much skilled in what is divine) conceived this clearly and divinely when he said in his sacred writings: "Even if there are many who are called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (even as there are many gods and many lords), there is for us but one God the Father—from which is all that is and ourselves in it—and one Lord Jesus Christ. On account of Him is all that is as well as ourselves."<sup>64</sup>

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Moreover, with respect to what is divine, the unities rule over and precede the differences and are not any the less unities even after the single and non-wandering<sup>65</sup> differences of the one. Now in accordance with our power, we shall attempt to celebrate these common and unified differences or good-showing processions of the whole divinity in conformity with the writings. But first we are to understand what has already been said: every good-working divine name which would be laid down about the persons of the godhead is to be unreservedly applied to the whole thearchic wholeness.

<sup>63</sup> See Proclus, in *Crat.* pp. 57, 58, 65, and 89.

<sup>64</sup> I Cor. 18:5-6.

<sup>65</sup> ἀνεκφοίτατον.

### CHAPTER III

#### THE POWER OF PRAYER. CONCERNING THE BLESSED HIEROTHEUS AND THE PIETY AND COVENANT OF THEOLOGY

680 A

#### 1

First, if it seems right, let us investigate the most complete name of "good" which reveals the whole processions of God. Let us call upon the Trinity which is the source of good and beyond good and which manifests the whole of the supremely good providences of itself.<sup>1</sup> It is necessary that we first be lifted up toward it, the source of good, by our prayers, and then, by drawing near to it, that we be initiated into the all-good gifts of what is founded around it. (For while it is present to all, not all are present to it.<sup>2</sup>) Then, when we invoke it by our most holy prayers with an unpolluted intellect which is suited for the divine union, we shall be present to it. For it is not in a place, so that it would be absent from some beings or have to go from one being to another. Moreover, even the statement that it is "in" all beings falls far too short of its infinity, which is beyond all and encompasses all.

B

Thus, we would raise ourselves by our prayers to the more sublime ascent of the divine and good rays, just as if a brilliantly lit cord, suspended from the highest heaven and brought down to us, is always grasped so that we ascend upwards to it by putting one hand over the other. It would seem as if we were bringing it down whereas, in fact, we do not bring it down (since it is present both above and below), but we ourselves are raised up toward the most sublime splendors of its brilliantly lit rays.

C

In the same way, when we are standing on a ship and are holding onto the chains, stretched out to us from a rock and, as it were, given to us to take hold of, then the rock does not come toward us; rather, we and the ship are in truth drawn towards it. Or, to consider the matter in an opposite way, if someone standing on a ship is separated

D

<sup>1</sup> τὴν ἀγαθαρχικὴν καὶ ὑπεράγαθον ἐπικαλεσάμενοι Τριάδα, τὴν ἐκφαντορικὴν τῶν ἑλῶν ἐαυτῆς ἀγαθωτάτων προνοίων. See St. Thomas, *De Pot.* 7.5.3a; *S.T.* 5. 2.1a, 13.11.2a.

<sup>2</sup> See Proclus, *El.Th.* 142.

from the rock on the shore, he does nothing to the standing and unmoved rock, but he is separated from it. In the same measure that he is separated from it, he is also hurled away from it. Wherefore, before everything and especially before a discourse about God, it is necessary to begin with a prayer—not so that the power present both everywhere and nowhere shall come to us but so that by our divine remembrance and invocations we ourselves shall be guided to it and be united with it.<sup>3</sup>

2

681 A Perhaps, however, our endeavor requires some defense: for while our illustrious teacher, Hierotheus, has compiled his *Theological Elements* in an exceedingly brilliant manner, we have written this present theology and other works as though we considered his insufficient. Clearly, if he had thought it worthwhile to investigate in an orderly manner every theological matter, and to cover thoroughly every theological subject by detailed expositions, we should never be so mad or boorish as to imagine that we might touch upon these theological matters in a more divine or lucid manner than he has. Nor, indeed, would we utter the same thing twice and incur upon ourselves the additional charge of injustice against a teacher and a friend—we who have been instructed from his writings after Paul the divine—by stealing his most renowned and clear contemplations.

B But, in fact, when he directed us and those with us who were teachers of the newly initiated, he urged us to judge by a discourse commensurate with our ability, that which had been comprehensively brought together by his greatest intellectual powers. Also, you have frequently urged us to do the same thing and have sent back his book to us as being too magisterial for you. For this reason, we judge that the instructions of his complete and presbyterial thoughts—which might be viewed as secondary writings in conformity with the writings of those anointed of God<sup>4</sup>—are for those beyond the many. Thus, we will transmit what is divine according to our logos to those who are our equals. For if strong food is what perfects, how great must be the perfection of what feeds this food to others.

C Now, we have correctly said that the eyewitness vision of the intelligible writings and a comprehensive instruction in these require the power of a presbyter, but the knowledge and thorough learning of the reason which bear one to this are adapted to those dedicated and hallowed persons who are inferiors. Nevertheless, we have taken

<sup>3</sup> See St. Thomas, S.T. II.11.83-1-2a.

<sup>4</sup> τινὰ δεύτερα λόγια, καὶ τῶν θεοχρίστων ἀκόλυθα.

great care not to deal tautologically with those matters which have been thoroughly investigated by our divine teacher in manifest clearness.

As you know,<sup>5</sup> once we and many of our holy brethren, as well as James the brother of God and Peter the highest and eldest summit of the theologians, were gathered together to view the god-receiving and life-giving body. At that time it was determined to have all the hierarchs celebrate the unlimited good power of the thearchic weakness, as was sufficient for each, after having seen the body. Among our divinely formed hierarchs Hierotheus excelled all the other sacred initiates, except for the theologians, as wholly inspired and wholly outside himself in experiencing a communion with what was celebrated. He was judged a divine celebrant who was receptive of God by all those who saw him, heard him, and knew him and did not know him.<sup>6</sup> Yet, what am I to say to you about what was there spoken of God? For I know that you have often heard some parts of their divinely inspired celebrations; for your zeal is not such as to partake of what is divine in a secondary way.

3

But let us pass over what was mystical there as ineffable to the many and as known to you. Now when it was necessary to communicate with the many so as to introduce as many as possible to our sacred knowledge—in the way he spent his time, by his purified intellect, by his precise demonstrations, and by his many sacred writings—that we would not have dared to behold that great sun face to face.

Thus, we know and are conscious of the fact that we are not able to proceed sufficiently to understand all intelligible matters about what is divine, nor are we able to speak out about or declare all that is spoken of the divine knowledge. For, being far removed from the knowledge that those divine men have of the theological truth, we have wholly entered into this discourse with an exceeding reverence: neither to speak nor to hear anything concerning the divine philosophy unless we have understood in our intellect that it is necessary not to neglect the knowledge which is received of what is divine. Indeed, not only have we been persuaded of this by the natural desires of the intellect, which always lovingly strive after the contemplations per-

B

C

<sup>5</sup> This passage contains the most explicit claim in the *Divine Names* by the author that he lived in the 1st Century A.D.

<sup>6</sup> πρὸς πάντων ὧν ἤκοντα καὶ ἑώρατο, καὶ ἐγινώσκετο καὶ οὐκ ἐγινώσκετο. We could also translate this as: "by all those who had seen, heard, and known him and, yet, did not know him.

mitted of what is beyond nature, but we have also been persuaded by the most excellent order of the divine laws. These considerations prohibit us from busying ourselves about what is divine, for this is worthier than us and unattainable by us, and urges us both attentively to desire and to be given to hear all that is appropriate to us, and to impart this in a good formed way to others.

D We are led to the writings by trusting in these things; we will neither flinch from nor be afraid of the attainable discovery of what is divine and we will not abandon those who are helpless in attaining to the contemplations which are greater than us. We do not care to introduce anything new, but rather to examine in more detailed fashion what has been truly and synoptically discussed and manifested by Hierotheus.



## CHAPTER IV

CONCERNING THE GOOD, LIGHT, BEAUTY, LOVE,  
ECSTASIS, AND ZEAL. THAT EVIL IS NEITHER BE-ING,  
NOR FROM BE-ING, NOR IN BEINGS

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### 1

So be it then. Let us now proceed in our discourse to the name of "good." The theologians transcendently distinguish this name of the divinity beyond god from all others; they call goodness, as I believe, the thearchic constitution<sup>1</sup> itself. For by *being*, the good (as "essential" good) extends goodness into all beings.<sup>2</sup> Now just as our sun—neither by choosing nor by calculating but by its *being*<sup>3</sup>—illuminates each of those partaking of its light according to the capacity of each logos, just so the good—beyond the sun as the elevated archetype is beyond its obscure image—by its constitution analogically sends forth the rays of its whole goodness to all beings.<sup>4</sup>

B

All intelligible and intelligent beings, powers, and activities subsist through these rays.<sup>5</sup> Through them they are and have an uneclipsed and undiminished life; they are purified from all destruction, death, matter, genesis, instability, and flux and they dwell away from the change which is borne now this way and now that way.<sup>6</sup> As incorporeal and non-material intelligibles and as intellects which know in a more than cosmic way, they properly illuminate the logoi of beings, They also transmit what is proper to those which are akin to them.<sup>7</sup>

C

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<sup>1</sup> ὑπαρξίς.

<sup>2</sup> καὶ ὅτι τῷ εἶναι τὸ ἀγαθόν, ὡς, οὐσιώδες ἀγαθὸν εἰς πάντα τὰ ὄντα διατείνει τὴν ἀγαθότητα. The suffix -ώδες in οὐσιώδες has the sense of "fullness" as in ποι-ώδης.

<sup>3</sup> οὐ λογιζόμενος ἢ προαιρούμενος, ἀλλ' αὐτῷ τῷ εἶναι.

<sup>4</sup> On the analogy between the sun and the good, especially the teaching that the sun and the good produce αὐτῷ τῷ εἶναι see Plato, *Rep.* VI.508C and Proclus, in *Crat.* pp. 103, 105, 106, and 107; *El.Th.* 122; *Pl.Th.* I.5, p.45, II.4.p.90ff, III.2.p.124. See also St. Thomas, *S.T.* I.19.4.1a, 23.4.1a, III.44.2.2m; *De Ver.* 5.2.1a, 10.7.10a.10m, 12.5.6a, 21.1.4a, 23.31a, 27.3.3a, 28.3.10a; *De pot.* 7.5.7a; *De Malo* 4.6.19a.

<sup>5</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Malo* 16.1.14m; *Quod.* VI.2.1c; *S.T.* I.50.3.4a.

<sup>6</sup> See St. Thomas, *S.C.G.* II.55.1312, *S.T.* I.50.5sc.

<sup>7</sup> See St. Thomas, *S.C.G.* II.91.1781; *S.T.* I.92c, 50.2sc, 51.1sc, 55.1sc, 106.1.1m; *De Ver.* 8.4.1; *De Pot.* 6.6c; *De Spir. creat.* 1.1sc, 5.1sc; *De Malo* 16.1.2m.

They have their abiding from goodness; from this is their foundation, conservation, protection and dwelling among those which are good.<sup>8</sup> In desiring goodness they have *being* and good *being*;<sup>9</sup> they are conformed to goodness as far as possible. They are good-forms and, as the divine law demands, they communicate to those which come after them the gifts which go forth out of the good into them.<sup>10</sup>

## 2

They also obtain these from the good: their super-cosmic orders, their unities among themselves, their separation in one another, their unconfused distinction, the powers of inferiors to be led upward to superiors, the providences of elders toward secondaries, the protection of what is proper to each power, the unchangeable convolution about themselves, the sameness and intensity of their desire for the good, and all else which pertains to them and which are discussed in our work *On What is Peculiar and Orderly to Angels*.<sup>11</sup>

Further, whatever pertains to the heavenly hierarchy is from the good: the purifications which are suitable for angels, their super-cosmic illumination, and the complete working out of the whole angelic perfection.<sup>12</sup> All these come forth out of the all-causing and flowing goodness. Their good-form and their manifesting of the hidden goodness in themselves have been given to them from out of this goodness. They are angels, for they announce the divine silence and are clear lights which project that which is inaccessible.<sup>13</sup>

C After these sacred and holy intellects come the souls and all of their goods. That they are the intellects that they are, that they have an essential and indestructible life, are also due to the goodness beyond good; even their *being* itself is possible through their power to be raised up to the angelic life.<sup>14</sup> Through the angels which act as good guides they are led upward to the good source of all goods, whence they come to be by a participation in the emanating illuminations according to their logos. Thus they participate in the good-formed gifts

<sup>8</sup> See St. Thomas, S.C.G. II.98.1845.

<sup>9</sup> καὶ αὐτῆς ἐφίμεναι, καὶ τὸ εἶναι καὶ τὸ εὖ εἶναι ἔχουσι.

<sup>10</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Malo* 7.9sc.

<sup>11</sup> This work is not extant. See St. Thomas, S.T. III.26.1a.

<sup>12</sup> See St. Thomas, S.T.Suppl. 92.3.1m.

<sup>13</sup> καὶ εἶναι ἁγγέλους ὥσπερ ἐξαγγελτικὰς τῆς θείας σιγῆς, καὶ οἱ φωταφανὰ τοῦ ἐν ἀδύτοις ὄντος ἐρμηνευτικὰ προβεβλημένας. See St. Thomas, *De Malo* 7.9sc.

<sup>14</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Spri. Creat.* 2.1sc; S.T. I.76.6sc, I-II.5.1.1a, III.10.4.2a, 46.1.4a.

as far as possible. But these matters and everything also that pertains to the world are enumerated by us in our *De Anima*.<sup>15</sup>

Further, if it is necessary to say anything concerning irrational souls (living beings)—those which fly in the air or are held to the earth, those animals in water (those which are amphibious), and those which live buried in the earth and are covered by it—it is this: all those which have a sensible soul or life are besouled and enlivened through the good. All plants have their growing and moving life through the good. Indeed, all soulless and lifeless being is and receives its essential conditions through the good.

D

3

But if the good is beyond all being, as it is, and the formless is form-producing, then in it alone is non-being thrust beyond being, non-life beyond having life, and non-intellect beyond having wisdom. Whatever is in the good is of the preeminent form-production of what is formless. Further, if it is lawful so to speak, even non-being itself desires the good beyond all beings, strives somehow to be in the good, and is itself the truly beyond being in the denial of all.<sup>16</sup>

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4

But let us proceed to what has meanwhile escaped our notice. The good is the cause of the celestial principles and limit terms, of the non-increase and unchangeableness of the celestial beings, of the noiseless motions—if it is necessary to speak of these—of the immense celestial spheres, of the astronomic order, dignity, light and constancy, and of the many changeable motions of some stars. [The good is the cause] of the periodic return from the same place into the same place of the two luminaries, which the writings call “great,”<sup>17</sup> according to which our days, nights, months, and years are measured and determined. For they determine, number, order and make continuous the circular motions of time and of those beings in time.<sup>18</sup>

B

What are we to say of the solar rays in themselves? For light is from

<sup>15</sup> This work is not extant.

<sup>16</sup> Εἰ δὲ καὶ ὑπὲρ πάντα τὰ ὄντα ἐστὶν-ὥσπερ οὖν ἐστι-τάγαθον καὶ τὸ ἀνείδειον εἰδοποιεῖ καὶ ἐν αὐτῷ μόνῳ καὶ τὸ ἀνούσιον οὐσίας ὑπερβολὴ καὶ τὸ ἄζωον ὑπερέχουσα ζωὴ. καὶ τὸ ἄνουν ὑπεραίχουσα σοφία, καὶ ὅσα ἐν ταγαθῷ τῆς τῶν ἀνείδεων ἐστὶν ὑπεροχικῆς εἰδοποιίας καὶ, εἰ θεμιτὸν φάναι, τάγαθου τοῦ ὑπὲρ πάντα τὰ ὄντα καὶ αὐτὸ τὸ μὴ ὄν ἐφίεται καὶ φιλονεκεῖ πῶς ἐν τάγαθῳ καὶ αὐτὸ εἶναι, τῷ ὄντως ὑπερουσίῳ κατὰ τὴν πάντων ἀφσίρεσιν. See St. Thomas, S.C.G. III.20.2013, S.T. I.12.1.3a, *Suppl.* 92.1.2a.

<sup>17</sup> Gen. 1:16:

<sup>18</sup> See St. Thomas, S.T. I-II.5.1.1a, II-II.95.5.1a.

C the good and is an image of goodness. Hence the name of "light" is celebrated of the good because it manifests the archetype in an image.<sup>19</sup> Now the goodness of the divinity beyond all extends from the topmost and first among beings downward to the last among beings and yet is beyond all such that the highest beings do not overtake its preeminence and the lowest do not cross over its encompassing. For it illuminates, creates, gives life, conserves, and perfects all that is empowered.<sup>20</sup> It is the measure, eternity, number, order, encompassing, cause and end of beings.

Similarly to be sure, the manifesting image of the divine goodness—our great, completely radiant, and always lit sun which is the least echo of the good—illuminates all of those which are capable of sharing its light. It has an exceedingly full light and unfolds the splendors of its own rays into all the visible world both above and below.

D If some do not share in this light, this is not due to the weakness or slowness of its ability to distribute light, but of a non-openness to sharing light which is due to an unsuitableness to receive light on the part of those not illumined by the sun. Clearly, the sun's rays, which pass over many of the last among beings, illuminate those beings which come after those rays. Further, in the exceeding, proper greatness of its own splendor there is no visible being which does not desire it. Its rays are brought together with a view to the generation of sensible bodies; it moves, nurtures, increases, perfects, and purifies them with a view to life.<sup>21</sup> It is the measure and number of hours, days and the light of all our time. As the divine Moses says,<sup>22</sup> it is the light itself, even if it was then formless, which determined the triad of the first days.<sup>23</sup>

700 A Similarly, goodness—as unifying and authoritative divinity—returns all to itself and is the source of the binding of those which are sun-dered.<sup>24</sup> All desire it as source, connection, and end.<sup>25</sup> For, as the writings say, the good is that from which all subsist and are—insofar as they are brought forward from the all-complete cause, that in which all are connected—for they are protected and held fast in its almighty power—and that into which all are returned according to the proper limit of each being.<sup>26</sup> It is that which all desire. Intellects and rational beings

<sup>19</sup> See St. Thomas, *S.T.* I.93.2.2a.

<sup>20</sup> τὰ δυνάμεν πάντα.

<sup>21</sup> See St. Thomas, *S.T.* I.90.3.1a, 11.5.3sc, I-11.46.1c, II-II.95.5.1a, III.7.9c.

<sup>22</sup> Gen. 1:3.

<sup>23</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Ver.* 21.6.11m; *De Pot.* 4.2.8m; *S.T.* I.67.4.2m, 68.1c, 70.1.2m.

<sup>24</sup> See St. Thomas, *S.T.* I-11.1.8.2a, II-II.34.1.3a.

<sup>25</sup> See Proclus, *El.Th.* 25,133.

<sup>26</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Ver.* 21.1.4a, 27.3.3a, 28.3.10a; *De Pot.* 9.9.14a, 10.1c, 2.3sc; *S.C.G.* I.37.307, III.24.2053.

are turned knowingly; sensible beings, sensibly; living beings without sensation, by the emerging-motion of their desire for life; lifeless beings, by being enabled to share only in being.<sup>27</sup>

According to the logos itself of the illuminating image [the sun], the light brings forward and returns to itself all that is visible, moving, illuminated, heated, and in general all those that emerge by its flashing-forth. Thus is it *helios* since it produces all together<sup>28</sup> and brings together those which are sundered. All sensible beings desire it, for they desire to be visible, moved, illuminated, heated, and, in general, to be brought towards the light.

However, we do not speak according to the ancient words that the sun is the god and creator of this world or the individual governor of this visible world. We affirm that "the invisible [attributes of God], his everlasting power and divinity, are made evident from the founding of the world to the created intellects."<sup>29</sup>

## 5

All of this is discussed in our *Symbolic Theology*. Now it is necessary that we celebrate and discuss the name "intellectual light"<sup>30</sup> in reference to the good. For the good is said to be intellectual light because it fills the super celestial intellects with intellectual light. It dispels all ignorance and error in those souls in which it comes to be, and gives to all these souls a share of the sacred light. It cleanses their spiritual eyes of the mist of ignorance which encompasses them. It elevates and opens out those who are shut up by the great weight of darkness.<sup>31</sup> First, it gives a moderate splendor to them. Then, when they have tasted the light, as it were, and have more greatly desired it, it more greatly gives itself and illuminates them abundantly, for they have loved much. It always raises them up to those after them according to their analogy for renewal.

## 6

The good beyond all light is said to be intellectual light as source ray<sup>32</sup> and overflowing burst of light. All intellects—both beyond the world, round about the world, or within this world—are illuminated by its fullness, which renews the power of their entire intellects. It encompasses all as beyond all order; it is beyond having all as placed beyond

<sup>27</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Malo* 16.4.15m.

<sup>28</sup> διὰ καὶ ἥλιος ὅτι πάντα ἀλλοῇ ποιεί. See Plato, *Crat.* 409A.

<sup>29</sup> Rom. 1:20.

<sup>30</sup> τὸ φῶς νοητὸν. See St. Thomas, *S.T.* I.67.2a.

<sup>31</sup> See St. Thomas, *S.T.* III.27.3.3a.

<sup>32</sup> ἀκτὶς πηγαία.

B all. And simply, in itself it comprehends, anticipates and is beyond having all authority of the power to give light as source of light and beyond all light.<sup>33</sup> It brings together all that is intellectual and rational by producing all of these together.

As ignorance is divided from those who err, the presence of intellectual light binds together, unifies, and completes those who are illumined and returns them to what really is.<sup>34</sup> It brings together their many visions or, to speak properly, phantasies from many opinions to a one, true, pure, uniform and unified knowledge; it fills them full of a one and unified light.<sup>35</sup>

7

C This good is celebrated by the sacred theologians as beautiful and as beauty, as *agapé* and beloved,<sup>36</sup> and by many other divine names which are suitable to its beauty producing and rich character.<sup>37</sup> Now the beautiful and beauty are not to be distinguished with respect to the cause which gathers the whole into one.<sup>38</sup> For with respect to all beings this whole is divided into participations and participants.<sup>39</sup> What is beautiful is said to be a participant in beauty; beauty is said to be the participating in the beauty producing cause of all that is beautiful.

That, beautiful beyond being, is said to be

Beauty—for

it gives beauty from itself in a manner  
appropriate to each,

it causes the consonance and splendor  
of all,

it flashes forth upon all, after the  
manner of light, the beauty producing  
gifts of its flowing ray,

it calls all to itself,  
whence it is called beauty,<sup>40</sup>

<sup>33</sup> καὶ πάντας περιέχουσα τῷ ὑπερτετάσθαι καὶ πάντων ὑπερεχούσα τῷ ὑπερκείσθαι καὶ ἀπλῶς πᾶσιν τῆς φωτιστικῆς δυνάμεως τὴν κηρίαν ὡς ἀρχίφωτος καὶ ὑπέρφωτος ἐν ἑαυτῇ συλλαβοῦσα καὶ ὑπερέχουσα καὶ προέχουσα.

<sup>34</sup> τὸ ὄντως ὄν.

<sup>35</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Ver.* 1.4.2sc.

<sup>36</sup> ἀγαπητόν.

<sup>37</sup> See St. Thomas, *S.T.* I.5.4.1a.

<sup>38</sup> τὸ δὲ καλὸν καὶ κάλλος (οὐ) διαιρετέον, ἐπὶ τῆς ἐν ἑνὶ τὰ ὅλα συνειληφύας αἰτίας. The word (οὐ) is not printed in Migne, see *Dionysiaca* I.1784.

<sup>39</sup> εἰς μετοχάς καὶ μετέχοντα.

<sup>40</sup> ὡς πάντα πρὸς ἑαυτο καλοῦν-ὄθεν καὶ κάλλος λέγεται. See Plato, *Crat.* 416C. See also St. Thomas, *S.T.* II-II.141.2.3m, 145.2c.

it brings all together  
into the same;

Beautiful—as

At once all-beautiful and beyond-beautiful,  
always be-ing beautiful  
according to the same and in like manner;<sup>41</sup>

D

thus  
not coming to be,  
not passing out of being,  
not increasing or decreasing,  
not beautiful to some and  
ugly to others,  
not beautiful at one time and  
ugly at another,  
not beautiful in one relation and  
ugly in another.<sup>42</sup>

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It is not beautiful to some and  
ugly to others, but  
itself—always be-ing uniformly beautiful  
in virtue of itself and with itself,  
preeminently before-having in itself  
the flowing beauty of what is beautiful;  
before subsisting,  
in the simple nature beyond nature of  
the whole of what is beautiful and  
in its cause:

all beauty and all that is beautiful.<sup>43</sup>

From out of the beautiful:

*being* to all beings, so that each is  
beautiful according to its proper logos,  
the agreements, friendships, and  
communion of all that is,  
the unifications of all that is.<sup>44</sup>

Source of all:

the productive cause  
which makes and conserves the whole  
by its love of the beauty

<sup>41</sup> καὶ ἀεὶ ὅν κατὰ τὰ αὐτὰ καὶ ὡσαύτως καλόν.

<sup>42</sup> See Plato, *Symp* 211 A-B.

<sup>43</sup> τῇ γὰρ ἀπλῇ ὑπερφυεῖ τῶν ὅλων καλοῦν φύσει πᾶσα καλλονὴ πᾶν καλον ἐνδε-  
ιδῶς κατ' αἰτίαν προυφέστηκεν.

<sup>44</sup> See Proclus, *El.Th.* 124.

which is proper for each being,  
Limit of all and beloved:<sup>45</sup>  
the final cause—for all beings emerge  
for the sake of the beautiful.  
Paradigmatic cause:  
all are determined according to it.

B

The beautiful and good are the same:  
all beings desire the beautiful and the good  
with respect to every cause,  
no being fails to partake  
of the beautiful and good.  
(Indeed, we must necessarily dare to say:)  
that which is not partakes in the beautiful  
and good; it is itself the good when  
beyond-beingly celebrated in God in the  
denial of all.<sup>46</sup>  
The one beautiful and good is the single cause  
of all of the many  
which are beautiful and good.

From out of the beautiful and good:  
the essential constitutions<sup>47</sup> of all beings,  
their unities and their differences,  
their identities and their otherness,  
their similarity and their dissimilarity,  
the association of opposites,  
the distinction of their unities,  
the providences of superiors,  
the bonds of equals,  
and the reversion of inferiors,  
the protection and immutable abiding and  
foundation of all among themselves,  
the communions, agreements, and unconfused  
friendship of all beings in all  
which are proper to each,  
the commixture of all,  
the undissolved constancy of what is,  
the uneclipsed successions of what comes to be,

C

<sup>45</sup> ἀγαπητόν.

<sup>46</sup> ὅτε καὶ τὸ μὴ ὄν μετέχει τοῦ καλοῦ καὶ ἀγαθοῦ, τότε γὰρ καὶ αὐτὸ καλὸν καὶ ἀγαθόν, ὅταν ἐν θεῷ κατὰ τὴν ἀφαίρεσιν ὑπερουσίως ὑμανῇται.

<sup>47</sup> αἱ οὐσιώδεις υπάρξεις.



the rest and motion of the intellects,  
souls, and bodies.

That beyond all rest and motion is  
the rest and motion for all, as  
founding each being in its logos, and  
moving each being according to its proper motion.

8

The divine intellects are said to move circularly in becoming united to the illuminations of the beautiful and good which are without beginnings and without end. They are said to have a straight motion whenever they proceed into the providences of their inferiors rightly<sup>48</sup> directing all that is. Finally, they are said to move spirally in that providing for their inferiors they non-wanderingly abide in an identity continuously circling about the good and beautiful cause of that sameness.<sup>49</sup>

D

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9

The circular motion of the soul is both entrance into itself of those which are outside it and the uniform convolution of its intellectual powers. In this circular motion a non-erring motion is given to the soul which returns and gathers the soul from the many which are outside it. It is first returned into itself and then, as it comes to be of one form, it is singly united with its unified powers; in this way it is conducted to the beautiful and good beyond all beings: the one and the same, without beginning and end.<sup>50</sup>

The soul moves spirally insofar as it has been illuminated with the divine knowledge in a manner appropriate to it: not intellectually and simply, but logically and discursively, according to its mixed and changing activities. Now the straight motion of the soul is not its entrance into itself (for this is a circular motion, as has been said); rather, in this motion it proceeds away from those outside of it to those about it, just as it is led from many and various symbols to simple and unified contemplations.<sup>51</sup>

B

<sup>48</sup> εὐθεία. The divine intellects, as having a straight motion are: κινεῖσθαι—κατ' εὐθείαν.

<sup>49</sup> ἀνεκφοιτήτως μένουσιν ἐν ταυτότητι περὶ τὸ τῆς ταυτότητος αἷτιον καλον καὶ ἀγαθον, ἀκαταλήκτως περιχορευόντος. Reading αἷτιον for αἷτιων. For the straight, circular, and spiral motions of the divinity see *D.N.* IX.9. For straight and circular motion in Proclus see *Pl.Th.* VI.8, p. 363ff, III.6, p. 330; *In Tim.* 126B, p. 297; *in Rep.* p. 70. See also St. Thomas, *S.T.* I. 54.24, 58.1a, II-II.180.6.1a.

<sup>50</sup> See St. Thomas, *S.T.* 194.2c.

<sup>51</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Ver.* 8.15.3a, *S.T.* II-II.179.1.3m.

- C The beautiful and good—beyond all rest and motion—is cause, conservator, and limit of the three sensible motions in this world and, even earlier, of the abiding, rest, and foundation of each being. All rest and motion are through the beautiful and good, from out of it, in it, into it and for the sake of it.<sup>32</sup> For from this and through this the being, all life, and intellect of the soul and every nature, all smallness, all equality, all greatness, all measure, the analogies and harmonies of beings, all wholeness, parts, all unity, multiplicity, all wholeness of parts, the unities of every multitude, the perfections of every whole, quality, quantity, magnitude, the infinite, all comparisons, all differences, every non-limit, every limit, all definitions, orders, excellences, elements, forms, every being, every power, every activity, every condition, every sensation, every logos, every intellection, every contact, every knowledge, and every union. Simply all be-ing is from the beautiful and good, is in the beautiful and good, and is returned to the beautiful and good.
- D

708 A All that is and comes to be both is and comes to be through the beautiful and good. All look toward it, are moved by it, are conserved by it, are for the sake of it, and are through it and in it. Every paradigmatic, final, productive, formal, and elemental cause—simply, every source, conservation, and limit—is in it. To speak summarily: all that is is from the beautiful and good; all that is not is beyond every manner of being in the beautiful and good, which is the source and limit—beyond every source and limit—of everything. As the sacred writings say: the all itself is from it, through it, in it, and into it. For every being the beautiful and good is desired, loved, and beloved.<sup>33</sup> Because of this the inferior love the superior admiringly, those of the same rank love one another communally, and the superior love their inferiors providentially, and all of these love each other in a unified way.<sup>34</sup> Indeed, every being produces and intends whatever it produces and intends by desiring the beautiful and good.<sup>35</sup>

- B We must boldly assert this true logos: this cause of all—thrust beyond goodness—loves all, produces all, completes all, conserves all, and returns all. Indeed, the divine good eros is good through the good. This

<sup>32</sup> δι' ὃ πᾶσα στάσις καὶ κινήσις καὶ ἐξ οὗ καὶ ἐν ᾧ, καὶ εἰς ὃ καὶ οὗ ἔνεκα. See St. Thomas *De Ver* 8.15.3a; *S.T.* II-II.179.1.3m.

<sup>33</sup> See St. Thomas, *S.T.* I-II.26.1.3m, 27.1.3a, II-II.24.2.1a, 25.7.3a, 34.1.1a, 114.1.1a, 145.2.1m.

<sup>34</sup> See Proclus, in *Alcib.* II.153; *El.Th.* 21. See also St. Thomas, *S.T.* I-II.28.5sc.

<sup>35</sup> See St Thomas, *S.C.G.* III.3.1888; *S.T.* ISuppl 98.5.1a, I-II.8.1sc, 28.6.sc.; *De Ver.* 22.1.12a; *De-Spe C.* 5a.

good working eros of beings—before be-ing; thrown beyond into the good—does not permit it to abide in itself but has moved it to a fitness for doing through the generative thrusting forth of all beings.<sup>56</sup>

11

And let no one imagine that we prefer the name of eros [over *agapé*] in a way that is contrary to the writings.<sup>57</sup> For, as I believe, it is irrational and foolish not to attend to the power of what is intended in discourse but to attend only to words. For this is not the mark of those who would attain to divine intellection but of those who would receive the barest echo of knowledge and who do not let the sounds that are without them beyond their ears. These latter persons do not come to know what such words signify and how it is necessary to clarify them through other equivalent and more evident statements. They cling to unintelligible letters, syllables, and words. These words do not pass over into the intellectual capacity of such persons but remain outside it around their lips where they simply buzz about.

C

They act as individuals who will not signify “four” through “twice two” or “straight lines” through “direct lines” or “motherland” through “fatherland” or, finally, other words through what means the same but is expressed in different words. By following right reason we must understand that we use letters, syllables, words, phrases, and statements on account of the sense. The senses, along with what is sensed, are no longer necessary when the soul is moved by its intellectual activities to what is intelligible and beyond the sense. In the same way, when the soul comes to be divinely formed, our intellectual activities are thrust upon the rays of the impassable light, the sightless objects, through unknowing unity.<sup>58</sup>

D

Clearly, when the intellect is seriously raised up through the senses toward a contemplative intellection, clearer interpretation will be wholly more honored than sensations and the most distinct and clear reasons will be wholly more honored than what is visible. For when the beings which lie close to the senses are unclear, they are not well enabled to present what is sensed to the intellect.

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However, so that we do not seem to pervert the sacred writings, let those who would slander the name of eros hear this: “Do not forsake

<sup>56</sup> αὐτὸς γὰρ ὁ ἀγαθοεργὸς τῶν ὄντων ἔρως ἐν τάχαθ' καθ' ὑπερβολὴν προσιπάρχουν οὐκ εἶασεν αὐτὸν ἀγονον ἐν ἑαυτῷ μένειν, ἐκείνησε δὲ αὐτὸν εἰς τὸ πρακτικεύεσθαι κατὰ τὴν ἀπάντων γενητικὴν ὑπερβολὴν. See St. Thomas, *De Pol.* 10.2.19m; S.C.G. I.91.765, IV.20.3570, I-II.109.3.6c.

<sup>57</sup> See St. Thomas, S.T. I-II.26.3.1.

<sup>58</sup> ὥσπερ καὶ αἱ νοεραὶ δυνάμεις ὅταν ἡ ψυχὴ θεωρεῖδης γενομένη δι' ἐνώσεως ἀγνώστου, ταῖς τοῦ ἀπροστίτου φωτὸς ἀκτισιν ἐπιβάλλῃ ταῖς ἀνομώτοις ἐπιβολαῖς.

her and she will keep you; love her and she will guard you. . . . Prize her highly and she will exalt you; she will honor you and you will embrace her"<sup>59</sup> and whatever else is celebrated by the sacred theologians.

12

B Nevertheless, it would seem that for some of our sacred writers the name of eros is regarded as more divine than that of *agapé*. But even the divine Ignatius writes: "my eros is crucified."<sup>60</sup> Further, in the aforementioned writings you will find these words about the divine wisdom: "I am come to be a lover of its beauty."<sup>61</sup> Thus clearly we should neither fear this name of eros nor should anyone clamor against us regarding these two names.<sup>62</sup> As far as I am concerned the theologians seem to judge the names of *agapé* and eros as common and, on account of this and the extraordinary preconceptions of such men, they attribute real love to those who are divine.

C Now both we and the writings themselves celebrate the true eros in a manner suitable to God. But the many who have not proceeded to the uniformity of the erotic divine name have, in a manner appropriate to themselves, slid off into the parted and divisible love of the body. But this eros is not a true eros but an image of the true eros, a falling away from the true eros. The singularity of the divine and one eros is not comprehended by the many. Thus since it seems to be a more difficult name to the many it is employed in the divine wisdom for the sake of returning and resurrecting these many to the knowledge of the true eros so as to free them from their difficulty in regards to it. Again, we have found many of low estate who have imagined something absurd in what seem to be good words:<sup>63</sup> "Your eros came upon us as the eros of women."<sup>64</sup> But those who listen correctly to what is divine will find that in the divine manifestations the names of eros and *agapé* are ordered to the same powers by the sacred writers.

D Eros is eminently a power of unifying, binding, and joining. Before subsisting, it is in the beautiful and good on account of the beautiful and good; it is given forth from out of the beautiful and good on account of the beautiful and good. It is a [power which] conjoins equals in communion with one another, moves those who are first toward the

<sup>59</sup> Prov. 4:6-8.

<sup>60</sup> *Ad. Rom.* VII.2.

<sup>61</sup> *Wis.* 8.2.

<sup>62</sup> See St. Thomas, *S.T.* I-II.26.3sc.

<sup>63</sup> ἡμῶν δὲ αὐθις ἔνθα καὶ ἄτοπον τι πολλάκις ἦν οἰθῆναι τοὺς χαμαιῆλους, κατὰ τὸ δοκοῦν εὐφημότερον.

<sup>64</sup> *II Reg.* 1:26.

providence of their inferiors, and founds inferiors through a return to their superiors.<sup>65</sup>

13

Moreover, the divine eros is ecstatic; it does not permit lovers to be among themselves but bids them to be among their lovers.<sup>66</sup> Superiors show this by coming to be among their inferiors through their providence. Equals show this through their bond with one another. Inferiors show this by returning to the more divine and first among beings. Thus, the great Paul who came to be inspired by the divine eros and participated in its ecstatic power, straightaway declared: "I live no longer but Christ lives in me."<sup>67</sup> He says this to God as a true and ecstatic lover; he does not lead a life for himself but he lives the life of a lover, a life which is exceedingly beloved.<sup>68</sup>

We must dare to say this beyond truth: the cause itself of all beings—by the beautiful and good eros of all and through the throwing forth of erotic goodness—comes to be outside of itself and into all beings through its providences and is, as it were, charmed by goodness, eros, and *agapé*. In an ecstatic power beyond being, it is brought down out of a separation from all and beyond all, to what is in all, yet does not wander out of itself.<sup>69</sup>

Hence those who are skilled in what is divine call it "zealous". For it is the great and good eros in beings; it stirs its desires and eros to zealousness. It manifests its zeal such that what is desired are objects of its zeal and as though what is provided for by it are objects of its zeal.<sup>70</sup> It is the eros and lover of the good and beautiful; it is established beforehand in the beautiful and good and is and comes to be through the beautiful and good.<sup>71</sup>

<sup>65</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Carit.* 9.7a; *De Spe.* 1.11a; *S.C.G.* I.91.758, IV.54.3926; *S.T.* I.20.1.3a, 60.3.2a, I-II.25.2.2a, 26.2.2m, 28.1sc, II-II.25.4c, 27.5.2a, 29.3.3m, 31.1.1m.

<sup>66</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Ver.* 13.2.9m; *De Malo* 6.1.13a; *Quod.* III.6.3c; *S.T.* I.20.2.1a, I-II.28.3sc, II-II.82.2.1a, 175.2.1a.

<sup>67</sup> Gal. 2:20.

<sup>68</sup> See St. Thomas, *S.T.* II-II.156.2.3a, 175.2.2m.

<sup>69</sup> *τολμητέον δὲ καὶ τοῦτο ὑπὲρ ἀληθείας εἰπεῖν ὅτι καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ πάντων αὐτός τῷ καλῷ καὶ ἀγαθῷ τῶν πάντων οἶρωτι δι' ὑπερβολὴν τῆς ἐρωτικῆς ἀγαθότητος, ἔξω ἑαυτοῦ γίνεται ταῖς εἰς τὰ ὄντα πάντα, προνοίαις, καὶ οἷον ἀγαθότητι καὶ ἀγαπήσει καὶ ἐρωτὶ θέλγεται καὶ ἐκ τοῦ ὑπὲρ πάντα καὶ πάντῳ ἐξηρημένον πρὸς τὸ ἐν πᾶσι κατάγεται κατ' ἐκστατικὴν ὑπερούσιον δύναμιν ἀνεκφοίτατον ἑαυτοῦ.* See St. Thomas, *S.T.* I.20.2.1m, I-II.28.3.sc.

<sup>70</sup> καὶ ὡς ξηλωτὴν αὐτὸν ἀποδεικνύοντα δι' ὃν καὶ τὰ ἐφιεμένα ξηλωτὰ καὶ ὡς τῶν προνουμένων οὕτων αὐτῷ ξηλωτῶν. Reading δι' ὃν for ὃ.

<sup>71</sup> See Plato, *Symp.* 204C, D, 266A and Proclus, in *Alcib.* 255 Bff. See St. Thomas, *De Ver.* 26.4.8a; *S.T.* I-II.28.4sc. "Established beforehand" equals

C In general what do the theologians mean when they sometimes call it eros and *agapé* and sometimes loved and beloved?

Of the one—

it is cause and, as it were,  
projector and progenitor;

it is the other

By the one, it is moved;

by the other, it moves:

it alone is productive and moveable  
of itself and by itself.<sup>72</sup>

Thus the theologians call it

Loved and beloved:

beautiful and good.

Eros and agape:

Moveable all at once

An upward power to itself;

it alone is beautiful and good through itself,

Manifest of itself and through itself,

A good procession of the separated unity,

A simple, self moved, erotic motion—  
active of itself,

Before be-ing, in the good,

Flowing forth out of the good to beings,

Returning again into the good;

in this the divine eros is excellently

manifested to be without beginning and  
without end.

The divine eros is like an everlasting circle—

moving around in unerring convolution

through the good,

out of the good,

in the good,

into the good,

D

*προΐδρυνται*. This term is more correctly understood as "before establishment." For, love is not established (does not subsist) until it emerges from out of the beautiful and good.

<sup>72</sup> τί δὲ ὅλως οἱ θεολογοὶ βουλόμενοι ποτὲ μὲν ἐρωτα καὶ ἀγαπὴν αὐτὸν φάσι ποτὲ δὲ ἐραστὸν καὶ ἀγαπητὸν, τοῦ μὲν γὰρ αἷτιος καὶ ὥσπερ προβολεύς καὶ ἀπογενητὴρ τὸ δε αὐτοῦ ἐστὶ, καὶ τῷ μὲν κινεῖται, τὸ δὲ κινεῖ ἢ ὅτι αὐτὸς ἑαυτοῦ καὶ ἑαυτῷ ἐστὶ προαγωγικός καὶ κινητικός.

always abiding, proceeding,  
and returning,  
in the same, and  
according to the same.<sup>73</sup>

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Our renowned initiator into what is sacred has directly celebrated all this in his erotic hymns. It is not out of place to remember these and to include them as sacred chapters in our discourse about eros.

15

*From the Erotic Hymns of the Most Holy Hierotheus*

Whether we consider eros to be divine, angelic, intellectual, psychic, or natural, we must understand it to be a unifying and binding power which moves superiors to provide for the weaker, which moves equals into a communion with one another, and finally which moves inferiors towards the return to those which are greater than they and which are placed beyond them.<sup>74</sup>

B

16

*From the Same Erotic Hymns of Hierotheus*

We have thoroughly ordered the many loves from the one by indicating in a regular manner the knowledge and powers of the loves within and beyond the world which, according to the manifest intention of the logos, are ruled over by the orders and regulations of the intellectual and intelligible loves. The really beautiful loves which are self-intelligible and divine are placed beyond these.

C

Now in a proper celebration let us gather all of these into one conjoined love: we at once bring together and bend the father of all these from the many by first gathering him into two lovable powers. The irrepressible cause of every eros and which is beyond all presides over and precedes these powers. It is that towards which the total eros of all beings is extended in a way that is natural for each being.<sup>75</sup>

17

*From the Same Erotic Hymns of Hierotheus*

Come then and let us collect all these [powers] into one and say that there is a single and simple power which is moveable of itself

D

<sup>73</sup> See Proclus, *El.Th.* 146; *in. Parm.* VI.96, VI.101; *Pl.Th.* IV.16, p. 204ff.

<sup>74</sup> See St. Thomas, *S.T.* I.60.1.1a, 2.1a, I-II.26.2.3a, 28.6.1m, 41.3.2a.

<sup>75</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Carit.* 9.71, *De Spe.* I.11a; *S.C.G.* I.91.760, IV.54.3926; *S.T.* I.20.1.3a, 37.1.3a, 60.3.2a, I-II.26.2.1a.2m, 28.1sc, II-II.25.4c, 27.5.2a.

toward a unified mixture from out of the good down to the last among beings and, subsequently, back again from this, through all, and into the good. It revolves out of itself, through itself, and upon itself; always and in the same way reverting into itself.

18

716 A

As was said, even what is not desires [the good] and strives somehow to be in it. It is productive of form for those without form. Even what is not is said to be and is directed toward the good beyond every manner of being.<sup>76</sup> Yet someone will say, if the beautiful and good is loved, desired, and beloved by all, why do the many demons not desire the beautiful and good but, being inclined toward matter, fall from their angelic identities in their desire for the good and come to be the cause of all evils both to themselves and to all others which are said to be evil? Why in general do the tribe of demons not have a good form since they are brought forward out of the good? How does a good which comes to be from the good come to be changed? What made them evil?<sup>77</sup>

In general, what is evil? From what source does it subsist? In which beings is it? How did the good will to produce it? How was such a will possible? If evil is from another cause than the good, what cause is there for beings beside the good? How is there evil if there is providence? How does evil come to be at all? Why is it not destroyed? Finally, how does any being desire it instead of the good?

B

19

Such questions as these will perhaps be raised in a perplexed discourse. But we demand that one look away from such a discourse into the truth of the matter. Thus we shall at first say this freely and boldly. Evil is not from the good; if something is from the good, it is not evil. As what is cold does not bring forth fire, what is not good does not bring forth what is good. Now it is the nature of the good to produce and to conserve while that of evil is to destroy and to ruin. Thus if all beings are from the good, no being is from evil. Indeed, evil itself will not be, for it would be evil to itself.

C

If this is not so, evil will not be wholly evil but will have some

<sup>76</sup> ἐφίεται γὰρ αὐτοῦ καὶ τὸ μὴ ὄν, ὡς εἴρηται, καὶ φιλονεικεῖ πως ἐν αὐτῷ εἶναι, καὶ αὐτό ἐστι τὸ εἰδοποιὸν καὶ τῶν ἀνειδεῶν, καὶ ἐπ' αὐτοῦ καὶ τὸ μὴ ὄν ὑπερ-  
ουσίως λέγεται καὶ ἔστι.

<sup>77</sup> See St. Thomas, S.T. I.114.3.1a, I-II.80.4.1a.



aspect of the good according to which it is able to be at all. Further, if all beings desire the good and beautiful, if all these produce whatever they produce through producing what appears good, and if the intention of beings has the good as its source and end—for no being focuses on the nature of evil to produce what it produces—how will evil be in beings or be produced from such a good desire?<sup>78</sup> Now if all beings are from the good and the good is beyond all beings, then that which is not is in the good. Thus, evil is neither be-ing (if not, [evil is] not wholly evil) nor not be-ing (for, nothing will be wholly non be-ing unless it is said to be in the good according to what is beyond being.<sup>79</sup>) The good lies beyond and is much prior to what simply is and what is not. Evil is neither in what is nor in what is not. Rather, it has a greater absence and estrangement from the good than what is not; it is more greatly without being than what is not.<sup>80</sup>

D

“But when, then, is evil?” someone will say. “For if there is no evil, both virtue and vice will be the same in whole and, by analogy, in part and what wars against virtue will not be evil. Nonetheless, temperance and intemperance are opposed and justice and injustice are opposed. I speak not only of just or unjust persons or temperate or intemperate persons. For even before the outward manifestation of their difference there is the much earlier opposition in the soul itself, in which the vices have already warred against the virtues, and the passions have already revolted against the logos. From these considerations some evil necessarily shows itself to be opposed to the good.<sup>81</sup> For the good is not opposed to itself, but since it is from one source and has come to be from one cause, it rejoices in communion, unity and friendship.<sup>82</sup> Further, the lesser good is not opposed to the greater good, just as lower heat or less cold are not opposed to greater heat or cold. Thus, evil is in beings and is be-ing; it is placed against and is opposed to the good. If evil is a destruction of beings this does not remove evil from *being* but it will itself be be-ing and generative of beings.<sup>83</sup> For does not the destruction of one being frequently come to be the genesis of this other being?<sup>84</sup> Thus evil contributes to the

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B

<sup>78</sup> See St. Thomas, S.T. I-II.18.4.1a, 72.1c, 78.1.2a.

<sup>79</sup> τὸ δ' κακὸν ὃν ἐστίν (εἰ δὲ μὴ οὐ πάντα κακὸν), οὔτε μὴ ὄν (οὐδὲν γὰρ ἔσται τὸ καθόλου μὴ ὄν, εἰ μὴ ἐν τάχατι κατὰ τὸ ὑπερούσιον λέγοιτο).

<sup>80</sup> ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτοῦ τοῦ μὴ ὅματος μάλλον ἀπέχον τάχαθ' οὐ. ἀλλότριον καὶ ἀνοσιώτερον. See St. Thomas, S.T. I.48.2.1a; *De Malo* I.11.10a, 2.3m, 3.5a, 3.12.10a.

<sup>81</sup> See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 202.12.

<sup>82</sup> See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 200.12. See St. Thomas, S.T. II-II.12.9.2c.

<sup>83</sup> See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 202.12.

<sup>84</sup> See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 206.21.

completion of all that is and provides through itself non-imperfection to the whole.<sup>85</sup>

20

C About these charges the true logos responds that evil as evil in no way produces being or genesis but only makes bad and destroys the subsistence<sup>86</sup> of beings as far as it is able.<sup>87</sup> But if someone says that evil is generative of beings and that by the destruction of one being genesis is given to another, one must respond truly that, as destructive, evil does not give genesis or being but that destruction and evil only destroys and makes bad. For genesis and being come to be through the good. Thus evil is destructive through itself but generative through the good.<sup>88</sup> Evil as evil is neither be-ing nor productive of beings; through the good it is good, be-ing, and productive of what is good.<sup>89</sup> Or, to put the matter another way, the same thing is not both good and evil in the same respect; the same power—whether itself a power or a destruction—will not be both productive and generative of the same thing in the same respect.<sup>90</sup> Evil itself is neither be-ing, good, nor generative or productive of beings or what is good.<sup>91</sup>

D Now in those beings in which it comes to be complete, the good produces complete, unmixed, and whole goods. However, those which participate in less of it are non-complete and mixed goods through their lack of the good. Evil is neither good nor productive of good, but those which draw more or less near to the good will be analogically good. Further, the all-complete goodness wanders<sup>92</sup> through all beings; it does not extend merely to the completely good beings about it but it stretches itself down to the last of beings. It is wholly present to some, present in a diminished fashion to others, and in the extreme it is present to others as each is able to partake of it.<sup>93</sup> Thus some beings partake wholly of the good, some are more or less deprived

720 A

<sup>85</sup> See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 202.12, 201.14. See St. Thomas *De Malo* 16.2.7a; S.T. I.19.9.2a.

<sup>86</sup> ὑπόστασις.

<sup>87</sup> See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 210.10.

<sup>88</sup> See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 251.35.

<sup>89</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Malo* I.1.8a.16a, 2.11.9a, 12.1.10m; *De Virt.* 9.1sc; *De Carit.* 12.12a; S.T. I.48.1.4m, I-II.18.1.1a, 3a, 29.3sc, 35.6sc, 60.5.4m, 63.2sc, III.86.5.2a.

<sup>90</sup> μάλλον δὲ οὐδὲ γὰρ ἔσται τὸ αὐτὸ κατὰ τὸ αὐτὸ καὶ ἀγαθὸν καὶ κακὸν, οὐδὲ τοῦ αὐτοῦ φθορὰ καὶ γένεσις ἢ αὐτὴ κατὰ τὸ αὐτὸ δύναμις οὔτε αὐτοδύναμις ἢ αὐτοφθύρα.

<sup>91</sup> See St. Thomas, S.T. I.48.1sc.

<sup>92</sup> φοιτῶς. Should be opposed to ἀνέκφοιτον.

<sup>93</sup> See St. Thomas, S.T. I-II.98.1c: "Beings" here is "οὐσίαι."

of it, some have a share of the good in a more inferior manner, and to others, which are the last among beings, the good is present as an echo. For if the good were not analogically present to each, then the most divine and eldest beings would have the order of the least among beings. But how would it be possible for all to uniformly partake in the good since not all are enabled to partake in the whole of it in the same way?<sup>94</sup>

Now this is the exceeding<sup>95</sup> greatness of the power of the good: it empowers both those which are deprived of it and the privation of itself toward the whole participation of itself. And if it is necessary to speak the truth freely and clearly, those which war against it do and are able to do battle against it by its power.<sup>96</sup> Hence to speak in a comprehensive fashion: all beings, in whatever way they are, are and are good and are from the good. Insofar as they are deprived of the good they are neither good nor be-ing. For with respect to other conditions such as heat or cold, there are those which are heated and those losing heat; further, many beings are without life and intellect. Even God is apart from being and "is" beyond every manner of being. And simply, with respect to everything else, there are many beings which are able to subsist, yet which have abandoned or have not achieved their own condition. But that which is deprived from the good in every respect was, is, will be, or is able to be in no manner whatsoever.

B

Thus the intemperate person who lacks the good by his irrational desires neither is nor desires what is; yet he shares the good according to the obscure echo of his unity and friendship. Even anger partakes of the good, for through its movement and desire it directs and returns what seems to be evil to what seems to be good. Moreover, even those who desire the worst life still desire life and what seems best to them; thus, they partake in the good by their very desire, their desire for life, and their search for [what seems to them to be] the best life.

C

If the good were wholly annihilated there would be neither being, life, desire, motion, or anything else. Hence the genesis which emerges from destruction is not a power of evil but is the presence of a lesser good. In this respect, disease is a lack of order, but not of every order. For if this were so the disease itself would not subsist; yet the disease is and it abides by having being with the least possible order. Nevertheless, it subsists along with the order.<sup>97</sup>

<sup>94</sup> πῶς δὲ καὶ ἦν δυνατόν μονοειδῶς πάντα μετέχειν τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ μὴ πάντα ὄντα ταυτῶς εἰς τὴν ὀλικὴν αὐτοῦ μέθεξιν ἐπιτήδεται.

<sup>95</sup> ὑπερβάλλον. This could be translated as "overflowing."

<sup>96</sup> See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 206.9.

<sup>97</sup> See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 205.31.

D That which is wholly apart from the good, is neither be-ing nor in beings. But that which is a mixed good is in beings on account of the good; thus it is be-ing and is in beings by partaking of the good.<sup>98</sup> Hence all beings will be more or less insofar as they partake of the good. For even with respect to being itself, that which is in no manner whatever will not be. But that which somehow is, somehow is not.

721 A Insofar as it has fallen away from what always is, it is not. Insofar as it partakes in be-ing, it is and its whole *being* and non be-ing are protected and preserved.

Evil, that which has entirely fallen from the good, will not be in those which are more or less good. But that which is somehow good—thus, somehow not good—wars against some beings that are good but not against the whole good.<sup>99</sup> It is protected by its participation in the good, for the good gives being to the privation of itself [with a view] towards the whole participation of itself. Given the complete absence of the good, nothing will be good, mixed or even evil itself. For if evil is non-complete good and the complete absence of the good would involve the absence of both mixed and complete goods, then evil will be and be seen only in respect to those to which it is opposed, and

B will be removed from others as good.<sup>100</sup> For it is impossible for the same things in the same respect to war against one another in every respect.<sup>101</sup>

## 21

C Evil is not be-ing nor in beings. For if all beings are from the good and the good is in all beings and encompasses all, then evil will not be in beings; it will not be in the good; nor will it be destructive through the good. (For, clearly, evil will no more be in the good than cold is in fire.) Yet if this were so, how would evil be in the good? It is impossible and absurd that evil be from the good. For as the writings say, “a good tree does not bring forth evil fruit”;<sup>102</sup> clearly, the opposite is not so. But if evil is not from the good, it is evident that it is from another source and cause. For either evil will be from the good or the good will be from evil. If this is not possible, then evil and the good will be from some other source and cause. However,

<sup>98</sup> See St. Thomas, S.C.G. III.7.1119.

<sup>99</sup> See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 207.25. “Beings” = οὐσίαι.

<sup>100</sup> Εἰ γὰρ τὸ κακὸν ἀτελές ἐστὶν ἀγαθὸν ἀπουσία παντελεῖ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ καὶ τὸ ἀτελές καὶ τὸ τέλειον ἀγαθὸν ἀπέσται. καὶ τότε μόνον ἔσται καὶ ὀφθήσεται τὸ κακὸν ἥνικα τοῖς μὲν ἐστὶ κακὸν οἷς ἡναντίωται, τῶν δὲ ὡς ἀγαθὸν ἐξηρηται.

<sup>101</sup> See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 197.7-208.24 in relation to D.N. 19-20.

<sup>102</sup> Matt. 7:18.

no dyad is a source; for the source of every dyad is one.<sup>103</sup> Nevertheless, it is absurd that before *being*<sup>104</sup> "are" two which are completely opposed and that these are from one and the same; for this source would not be simple and one but opposed to itself, so that it would become other than itself.<sup>105</sup>

Also it is clearly not possible for there to be two opposed sources of beings warring against one another and all beings. If this were so, God would be neither at rest nor separated from dispute, for something would be an adversary to him. Further, everything would be without order and always at war. Yet the good gives a share of friendship and peace itself to all beings; these gifts of peace are celebrated by the sacred writings. Wherefore, everything that is good is friendly, and harmonious, a descendant of one life, ordered together toward one life, and are like and gentle and agreeable with one another.<sup>106</sup>

724 A

Evil is not in God nor is evil divine. Evil is not from God; for either God is not good or he is good-producing and productive of good things. Now God does not sometimes produce what is good and at other times not produce what is good, nor does God not produce all that is good. For this would bring change and otherness in God in regard to causality which is the most divine of all. But if the good constitution is in God then when he changes from the good he will sometimes be and at other times not be.<sup>107</sup> Further if God participates in the good and derives this participation from another, he will sometimes have it and at other times not have it. Thus evil is not from God nor in God, neither simply nor temporally.<sup>108</sup>

22

Evil is not in angels. For if the good formed angel announces the divine goodness and is in a secondary way according to participation that which the announced is in a primary way according to cause, then an angel is an image of God, a manifestation of the unmanifested light,<sup>109</sup> a pure mirror, what is most clear, without flaw, undefiled, and unstained so that it receives the whole richness of the good formed divine idea (if it is permissible to say this)<sup>110</sup> and purely illuminates the

B

<sup>103</sup> See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 231.10.

<sup>104</sup> *προεἶναι*.

<sup>105</sup> See St. Thomas, *S.C.G.* III.7.1919.

<sup>106</sup> See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 250.13.

<sup>107</sup> See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 211.8

<sup>108</sup> See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 211.1 for this passage and 209.29-212.8 for this section.

<sup>109</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Ver.* 8.7.1a.

<sup>110</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Ver.* 8.3.3a, 4.3a, 8.8a, 16.1a; *S.T.* I.12.4.1a, 58.4c.

goodness of the silence of the innermost sanctuaries.<sup>111</sup> There is no evil in angels.<sup>112</sup>

- C Are angels evil by punishing wrongdoers? This question considers both those who chastise wrongdoers, with regard to what is sacred, those who bar the uninitiated from the divine mysteries to be evil. But clearly, it is not evil to punish but to become worthy of punishment. Further, those who are properly kept from what is sacred are not evil, while those who have come to be unholy, unsacred, and no longer suited for what is undefiled are evil.<sup>113</sup>

23

Demons are not evil by nature. For if they were evil by nature they would not be from the good nor would they be among beings—nor indeed would they change from the good since they would be always evil by nature. Are demons evil to themselves or to others? If they are evil to themselves, then they destroy themselves. If they are evil to others, how do they destroy these others and what do they destroy? Do they destroy being, power, or activity?

- D Suppose that they destroy being. Then this is not contrary to nature, for only those beings<sup>114</sup> capable of receiving destruction can be destroyed, not those which are by nature indestructible.<sup>115</sup> Hence such destruction is neither entirely evil nor evil to all. However, no being among beings is destroyed with respect to being and nature; they are destroyed by lacking the order of nature such that their logos of harmony and symmetry is weakened and is not able to remain the same.<sup>116</sup> Yet this weakness is not complete. For if it were complete the destruction and what is destroyed would be annihilated. Such destruction is a destruction of itself; this is not evil but a lack of good. For what is wholly apart from the good will not be among beings. The same reasoning applies to the destruction of power and activity.<sup>117</sup>
- 725 A

How do demons come to be from God if they are evil? For the good brings forth and lets stand what is good. Nevertheless, as some will say, demons are called evil. But they are not called evil insofar as they *are*—for they are and have received good being—but insofar

<sup>111</sup> See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 212.37, 212.21.

<sup>112</sup> See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 213.15.

<sup>113</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Malo* I.5.10c; *S.T.* I.48.6c, I-II.87.1.2m, App. Suppl. 1.5c.

<sup>114</sup> οὐσίαι.

<sup>115</sup> See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 214.20.

<sup>116</sup> ἀλλὰ τῇ ἐλλείψει τῆς κατὰ φύσιν τάξεως, ὁ τῆς ἀρμόνας καὶ τῆς συμμετρίας λόγος ἀσθενεῖ μένειν ὡσαύτως ἔχων.

<sup>117</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Malo* 3.5.2a, 16.2.1sc; *S.T.* I.63.4sc.

as they *are not*. As the writings say, they have been weakened and cannot maintain their own beginnings.<sup>118</sup> It seems to me that we must maintain that demons have become bad only by falling from the conditions and activities of their divine goods.<sup>119</sup> For if demons are evil by nature they are always evil. Yet evil is unstable. Thus if they are to always remain in the same way they are not evil; for to always be the same is the mark of what is good. Hence if they are evil, they are not evil by nature but by a defect of their angelic goods.<sup>120</sup> Further, they are not wholly apart from the good insofar as they are, are living, thinking and have any sort of desire at all. Rather, they are called evil through being weak in respect of their natural activities. For demons, evil is a turning away and departure from, and a disorder, non-completion, and impotency of what is suitable for them. Evil is a weakness, a flight from, and falling away from their most complete saving power.<sup>121</sup>

Otherwise, what is evil in demons? An irrational anger, a non-intellectual desire, or rash phantasies? But none of these, even if they are evil in demons, are wholly evil, or evil with respect to all beings, or evil in themselves. For with respect to animals it is not the possession of these but their removal that is a destruction and an evil to the animal. The possession of these preserves and produces the nature of the animal having them.<sup>122</sup> Hence, the tribe of demons is not evil insofar as they exist according to nature but insofar as they do not do so.<sup>123</sup>

The whole goods which have been given to them have not become other. The demons have fallen from their whole goods. We do not say that the angelic gifts which are given to them ever become other than what they are, for these are completely lit and whole, but that the demons do not see them, for they have closed themselves off from their good formed powers. Now whatever is from the good, is good, and desires the beautiful and good by desiring *being*, life, and thinking. It is by lacking, fleeing from and falling away from the good which is suitable for them that demons are called evil. They are evil insofar as they are not, and by desiring what is not, they desire what is evil.<sup>124</sup>

<sup>118</sup> ἀρχή.

<sup>119</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Ver.* 6.2.11a; *De Malo* 3.1.8m.

<sup>120</sup> See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 215.29.

<sup>121</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Malo* 16.2.1m.4m, 3.1a, 2a; *Quod.* V.4.1.1m.

<sup>122</sup> See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 216.33, 216.22.

<sup>123</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Anima* 19.8a; *De Malo* 16.1.3a, 6.15a; *S.T.* I.54.5.3a, 58.5.1a, 59.4.1a.

<sup>124</sup> See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 214.7-218.4 in regard to this section. See St. Thomas, *De Ver.* 9.1.14a, 22.2.3m, 24.10.14a.17a; *De Anima* 17.7m, 18.1a; *De Malo* 2.11.1a, 4.1.11a, 16.1.2sc, 5.1.16.18a, 6.3a.c; *De Virt.* 8.1sc; *S.C.G.* 51.3870; *S.T.* I.64.1sc, 2.5a, 95.1c, 109.1c, I-II.63.1sc, 85.1.1a, II-II.25.11.1a; *Suppl.* 89.4.2m, 98.1.1a.

D But is someone to say that souls are evil? Is this because they meet with evil providentially and with a view to their preservation? But  
 728 A then this is not evil; rather, it is good and is from the good—that which makes even evils into something good. If we are to say that souls have become bad, in what respects have they gone bad? Surely they have gone bad through the lack of their own good habits and activities and by their proper disorder, weakness and aberration.<sup>125</sup> For we even say that the air about us is darkened by lacking light and by the absence of light. For the light itself is always light and always illumines the dark.<sup>126</sup> Hence evil is neither in demons or in us as be-ing evil but as a lack and defection of our most complete and proper goods.<sup>127</sup>

B Evil is not in irrational animals. For if you would destroy anger, desire and all the other things which are called evil but which are not absolutely evil in their own nature, you would destroy, for example, the strength and ferocity of a lion so that the lion would no longer be a lion. Further, if a dog were to become friendly to all it would cease to be a dog; for a dog is a guardian: it is to admit those who are friendly and drive away those who are strangers.<sup>128</sup> Thus that which does not destroy nature is not evil; the destruction of nature is the weakness and lack of natural habits, activities, and powers. In addition, if what comes to be has its completion in time, then the non-complete is not wholly contrary to nature.<sup>129</sup>

C Evil is not in the whole of nature.<sup>130</sup> For if all natural logoi are from the universal nature, then there is nothing which is opposed to the universal nature. Yet for some beings as individuals, some logoi will be in conformity with their natures and others will not. For while something is contrary to the nature of one being that something is also in conformity with the nature of another.<sup>131</sup> The badness of nature is

<sup>125</sup> See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 222.28.

<sup>126</sup> See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 219.28.

<sup>127</sup> See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 218.5-223.12 for this entire section. See St. Thomas, *De Malo* I.1.5a.

<sup>128</sup> See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 224.17.

<sup>129</sup> See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 225.1 for this passage and 223.13-225.32 for this section. See also St. Thomas, *De Malo* 2.127a, 3.1.10m, 12.1.2a, 16.2c; S.T. I.63.4.3m.

<sup>130</sup> See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 225.36.

<sup>131</sup> See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 226.1.



that contrary to nature: the privation of what pertains to nature.<sup>132</sup> There is no evil nature. Rather, this is evil to nature: the impotency to achieve what is proper to that nature.<sup>133</sup>

27

Evil is not in bodies. For ugliness and disease are a lack of form and a privation of order. For these are not wholly evil but they are among what is less beautiful. For if a body would come to be dissolved of beauty, form, and order the body itself would be gone.<sup>134</sup> In addition, the body is not the cause of evil to the soul. This is made evident in that evils are able to be contrary to what subsists even without the presence of a body. This is true with demons. Now this is evil to intellects, souls, and bodies: the weakness and falling away from the conditions of their proper goods.<sup>135</sup>

D

28

We are not to accept the frequently asserted statement that evil is in matter as matter.<sup>136</sup> For even matter has a share in the world, in beauty, and in form. But if matter is without these, without quality, and formless, how can matter, which does not have the power in itself to be affected, produce anything?<sup>137</sup> Otherwise, how is matter evil? For if it in no manner whatever is, it is neither good nor evil. But if it is somehow be-ing and all beings are from the good, then even matter is from the good. But then either the good is productive of evil and evil, which would be from the good is good or evil is productive of good, which would then be from evil, and the good is evil. Or, again, these two sources are derived from some one higher source.<sup>138</sup>

729 A

If someone says that matter is necessary for the completion of this world how is matter evil? For evil is one thing and what is necessary is another. How does the good bring forth something out of evil towards genesis?<sup>139</sup> How is evil good if it flees from the nature of the good? How does matter generate and nurture nature if it is evil? For evil as evil is generative, nutritive, productive, and conservative of nothing at all.<sup>140</sup>

B

<sup>132</sup> φύσεως δὲ κακία τὸ παρὰ φύσιν, ἢ στέρησις τῶν τῆς φύσεως.

<sup>133</sup> See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 227.9 for this passage and 225.33-229.19 for this section.

<sup>134</sup> See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 227.20.

<sup>135</sup> See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 227.22ff, for this section.

<sup>136</sup> See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 229.28.

<sup>137</sup> πῶς ποιεῖ τι ἢ ὕλη, ἢ μηδὲ τὸ πάσχειν δύνασθαι καθ' ἐαυτὴν ἔχουσai;

<sup>138</sup> See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 230.27.

<sup>139</sup> See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 231.35, 232.24.

<sup>140</sup> See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 232.3

How will it be true to say that matter does not produce evil souls but draws the soul down to it? For many souls look to the good, but how would this come to be if the souls are entirely drawn down by matter into evil? In souls evil does not consist [in a freedom] from matter but in a disorderly and discordant motion. Moreover, if one says that these souls invariably follow matter, then unstable matter is necessary to those which are incapable of being established with respect to themselves. But how is evil what is necessary, or what is necessary, evil?<sup>141</sup>

29

C We do not say this: privation wars against the good according to its own power. For an all complete privation is universally impossible. A partial privation does not have power insofar as it is a privation but insofar as it is not a complete privation. For a partial privation of the good is not yet evil; if it comes to be, the nature of evil is dissolved.<sup>142</sup>

30

732 A

To speak in a summary fashion: the good is from one whole cause; evil is from many partial defects.<sup>143</sup> God knows evil as good and with God the causes of evils are good-producing powers.<sup>144</sup> But if evil is everlasting, creates, has power, is, and acts, whence does it obtain these? For either they are from the good or the good is from evil or they are both from other causes.<sup>145</sup>

All that is in conformity with nature comes to be from defined causes. But if nature is without cause <sup>146</sup> and undefined, it is not by nature. For that contrary to nature [does not come to be] by nature any more than what is contrary to art [comes to be] by art<sup>147</sup> But is not the soul the cause of evils, just as fire is the cause of what is hot, so that whatever comes in contact with it is full of evils?<sup>148</sup> Is the na-

<sup>141</sup> See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 237.33 for this passage and 229.28ff, for this section.

<sup>142</sup> See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 239.14 for this passage and 239.19-240.27 for this section. See St. Thomas, S.C.G. III.9.1931; S.T. I-II.75.4.1a.

<sup>143</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Ver.* 15.4.13m, 28.3.15m; *De Malo* 2.1.3m, 4.2.2m, 7.3a, 9.12a, 4.1.11.13m, 8.1.12a.4c, 10.1c, 16.6.11m; *De Correct. frat.* 1c; S.T. I.19.12.4a, I-II.18.3a, 4.3m, 19.6.1m, 7.3m, 35.8.1m, 70.4.2m, 71-5.1m, 72.9.1a, II-II.53.2.3a, 79.3.4m, 92.21m, 110.3c, III.8.7.3a, 90.2.4m, *Suppl.* 49.4.2a, 69.7.1m, *App. Suppl.* 1.1.2m.

<sup>144</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Malo* 3.1.7a.

<sup>145</sup> See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 245.26.

<sup>146</sup> ἀναιτίον. This could also be translated as "uncaused."

<sup>147</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Malo* 3.6.4a, 4.2.8a; S.T. I.49.1.4a, I-II.75.1.1a.

<sup>148</sup> See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 247.33.

ture of the soul good but does it not sometimes act in one manner and sometimes in another? But if the *being* and nature of the soul are evil, whence does it obtain these except from the good creative cause of the totality of what is? But if the soul is from this how is it evil in being? For all that is good is descended from the good creative cause. But if it is evil in its activities, this is not unchangeable. For if not, from whence does it obtain its virtues unless it itself has come to be good formed?<sup>149</sup> Thus it remains that evil is a weakness and lack of the good.<sup>150</sup>

B

### 31

The cause of all that is good is one. Hence if evil is opposed to the good, the causes of evil are many.<sup>151</sup> But, clearly, those which are productive of evil are not *logoi*, powers, but weaknesses, impotencies, and a non-symmetrical mixing of what is dissimilar.<sup>152</sup> Now evils are neither unmoved nor do they always remain the same; rather, they are unlimited, undefined, and they move in others and are themselves unlimited.<sup>153</sup> However, the source and goal of evils is the good. For all beings—both those which are good and those which are opposed to the good—are for the sake of the good. Even we do all that we do by desiring the good; for nothing focuses on evil to produce whatever it produces.<sup>154</sup> Hence evil does not have subsistence but it is contrary to subsistence. Evil comes to be for the sake of the good and not for the sake of itself.<sup>155</sup>

C

### 32

Evil is to be posited as accidental *being*.<sup>156</sup> It emerges through another and not from its own proper source. Thus that which comes to be seems to be right because it comes to be for the sake of the good; yet in being it is not right because what is not good is taken to be good. It is manifest that what is desired is other than that which comes

<sup>149</sup> Εἰ δὲ ταῖς ἐνεργείαις, οὐδὲ τοῦτο ἀμετάβλητον. εἰ δὲ μὴ, πόθεν αἱ ἀρεταί, μὴ καὶ ἀγαθοεΐδους αὐτῆς γινομένης.

<sup>150</sup> See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 248.27. See St. Thomas, *De Malo* 16.2.12a.

<sup>151</sup> See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 250.5.

<sup>152</sup> See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 251.33.

<sup>153</sup> See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 251.26. See St. Thomas, *S.T.* I.48.1.3m, I-II.21.2.3a, 55.3c, 75.4.1a, II-II.10.5.5c, *Suppl.* 50.1.1.

<sup>154</sup> See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 252.2.

<sup>155</sup> διὸ οὔτε ὑπόστασιν ἔχει τὸ κακὸν, ἀλλὰ παρανόστασιν, τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ ἕνεκα καὶ οὐκ ἑαυτοῦ γινομένον. See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 252.12 for this passage and 242.27-252.22 for this section.

<sup>156</sup> τῷ κακῷ τὸ εἶναι θετέον κατὰ συμβεβηκός. See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 250.5.

to be. Hence evil is contrary to intention, contrary to the path,<sup>157</sup> contrary to nature, contrary to cause, contrary to source, contrary to end, contrary to definition, contrary to wish, contrary to subsistence.<sup>158</sup> Thus,  
 D evil is a privation, lack, weakness, non-symmetrical, failure, non-intention, non-beauty, non-life, non-logos, non-intellect, non-complete, unfounded, non-cause, undefined, unborn, inactive, weakness, dissimilar, unlimited, obscure, non-being, and itself be-ing in no manner whatever at all.<sup>159</sup>

733 A But then how is it possible for what is evil to be mixed with what is good? For that wholly apart from the good neither is nor is empowered.<sup>160</sup> But if the good is be-ing, is willed, empowering, and active, how is it possible that something opposed to the good lacks being, desire, power, activity? Not all beings are evil to all others nor are the same things evil in every respect. For demons, evil is being contrary to a good formed intellect; for the soul, evil is being contrary to reason; for a body, evil is being contrary to nature.<sup>161</sup>

### 33

B How in general can there be evils if there is providence? Now evil as evil is neither be-ing nor in beings, and there is no being which is apart from providence. For, if constituted unmixed with the good, evil is not be-ing.<sup>162</sup> If no being is without participation in the good, if evil is a lack of the good, and if no being lacks the beautiful and good, then the divine providence is in all beings and no being is without providence. For providence uses, in a good manner, even those which come to be evil with a view to the individual and the common benefit both of themselves and of others. Hence it properly provides for each being.

We do not accept the purposeless discourse of the many who say that providence should lead us unwillingly to virtue. For providence is not a destroyer of nature. Thus providence provides for the nature of

<sup>157</sup> *παρὰ τὴν ὁδόν.*

<sup>158</sup> *παρὰ τὴν ὑπόστασιν.* See Proclus, *de mal. sub.* 254.2. See St. Thomas, S.C.G. III.4.1894; S.T. 148.1.4m, 82.2.1a, I-II.8.1sc, 19.1.1a, 29.4c, 74.1.1a, *suppl.* 49.5.1a, 98.1.2a, 5.2a. *De Ver.* 18.6c, 24.2c, 7.6m, 8c, 28.2.7m; *De Malo* 1.3.2.sc, 5m.14m, 5.10a.2.1c, 3.2.1a, 6.4a, 9.4a, 12.1a, 10a, 14.7a, 10.1c, 16.6.13a.

<sup>159</sup> *καὶ αὐτὸ μηδαμῶς μηδαμῇ μηδὲν ὄν.* See Proclus, *de mal. sub.* 255.13.

<sup>160</sup> See Proclus, *de mal. sub.* 258.20.

<sup>161</sup> See Proclus, *de mal. sub.* 259.27 for this passage and 252.30-261.2 for this section. See St. Thomas, *De Ver.* 13.1.5a, 15.3.4a; *De Malo* 2.4c, 4.2.3m, 7.7.2sc, 19.1c, 16.2c; S.T. I-II.18.5c, 24.1.2a, 34.1.1a, 55.4.2m, 58.1.3a, 71.2c, 6.5a, II-II.47.6c, 123.1c.12c, 135.1.2a, 141.1c.6c, 142.1.2a, 158.1.2a, 8.3a, 162.1c, 167.1.1a.

<sup>162</sup> *οὐδὲ γὰρ ἔστι τὸ κακὸν ὄν, ἀμύγες ὑπάρχον τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ.*

each; it provides for the self-moving as self-moving. It provides for the whole and for individuals in a manner that is proper to the whole and to individuals insofar as the nature of those provided for receives the providential goodness which is given out by the universal and manifold goodness according to the analogy of each being.<sup>163</sup>

C

34

Thus evil is not be-ing nor is it in beings, for evil as evil is of nothing at all. The coming to be of evil does not happen according to power but according to weakness.<sup>164</sup> As for demons, which are and are from the good, evil arises from the declension and alteration of their own goods and is a weakness concerning the sameness and condition of the most angelic dignity which is appropriate to them. Insofar as they desire *being*, life, and intellect, they desire the good. But insofar as they do not desire the good, they desire what is not; this is not a desire but a declension from true desire.

35

The writings knowledgeably call wrongdoers those who are weak in an unceasing knowledge or desire of the good, or those who know what is willed but do not do it: these persons hear but are weak according to their belief or activity in the good and are unwilling to understand what has been made good through a perversion or weakness of their will. In general, as has often been said, evil is a weakness, impotency, and lack whether of knowledge (or of unceasing knowledge), trust, desire, or activity of the good.<sup>165</sup>

736 A

Nevertheless someone will say that weakness should not be punished but, on the contrary, that it should be pardoned. Now if the power was not had,<sup>166</sup> such a statement would be right. But if power is from the good which, according to the writings, gives absolutely what is appropriate to all, then the declension, perversion, and fleeing and falling away from the good habits of one's proper goods is not laudable. But these matters have been sufficiently discussed by us according to our ability in our work *Concerning Justice and Divine Judgment*.<sup>167</sup> In this sacred work, the truth of the writings has disallowed such sophistical, unjust and false babbling about god as a deranged discourse.

B

<sup>163</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Ver.* 5.3.5a, 4.4m; *S.T.* I.22.4sc, 48.2.3m, I-II.10.4c, 51.4.2e, II-II.165.1c, III.4.2.1a.

<sup>164</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Malo* 1.2.1a.

<sup>165</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Carit.* 6.6a.

<sup>166</sup> εἰ μὲν οὐκ ἔξῃν τὸ δύνασθαι.

<sup>167</sup> This work is not extant.

Now then we have adequately celebrated the good as truly wondrous,<sup>168</sup> as source and limit of all, the encompassing of all, as what produces form for those which are not, as cause of all that is good—but not as cause of all evils<sup>169</sup>—as complete goodness and providence thrown beyond all that is and is not, as making both evil and the privation of itself good, as desired by all, loved by all, beloved of all, and as everything in our preceeding discourse which, as I believe, has shown forth the true logos.<sup>170</sup>

<sup>168</sup> ἀγαστόν.

<sup>169</sup> ὡς τῶν κακῶν ἀναίτιον.

<sup>170</sup> See Proclus, *de mal sub.* 261.3-267.23 for sections 33-35 of this work. See St. Thomas, *De Malo* 3.12.10a.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCERNING BE-ING AND PARADIGMS

816 A

#### 1

Let us now proceed to the theological name of be-ing, which is exclusively the name of what truly is. Further, we must remember that the aim of our discourse is not to manifest the being beyond being as beyond being for this is ineffable, unknown, completely non-manifest, and exceeds unity itself. We are to celebrate the being-producing procession of the thearchic source of beings in all beings.<sup>1</sup>

B

For the divine name of good which manifests the whole processions of the cause of all is extended into all that is and all that is not and is beyond all that is and beyond all that is not. That of be-ing is extended into all that is; yet is beyond all that is. That of life is extended into all that lives; yet is beyond all that lives. That of wisdom is extended into all those which are intellectual, rational, or sensible; yet is beyond all these.

#### 2

Our discourse desires to celebrate the divine names of the manifesting providence. It does not promise to describe the beyond-being goodness, being, life, and wisdom itself of the divinity itself beyond being, of that—as the writings say—supremely founded in hiddenness beyond every goodness, divinity, being, wisdom, and life. Our discourse celebrates the goodness which has preeminently manifested the good-producing providence, the cause of all goods, be-ing, life and wisdom: the being producing, life producing, and wisdom giving cause to all those which participate in being, life, intellect, reason, and sensibility.

C

I do not maintain that the good is one, while be-ing is another, life another, or wisdom another; nor do I maintain that there are many causes or that there are other ruling and subordinate divinities which

<sup>1</sup> Μετῆτόν δὲ νῦν ἐπὶ τὴν ὄντως οὐσαν τοῦ ὄντως ὄντος θεολογικὴν οὐσιωνυμίαν. τοσοῦτον δὲ ὑπομνήσομεν ὅτι τῷ λογῷ σκοπὸς οὐ τὴν ὑπερούσιον οὐσίαν ἢ ὑπερούσιος ἐκφαίνειν-ἀρρήτον γὰρ τοῦτο καὶ ἄγνωστον ἐστὶ καὶ παντελῶς ἀνέκφρατον καὶ αὐτὴν ὑπεραίρον τὴν ἔνωσιν-καὶ τὴν οὐσιοποιον εἰς τὰ ὄντα πάντα τῆς θεαρχικῆς οὐσιαρχίας προόδον ὑμνήσαι.

D are productive of other beings. I do maintain that the whole good  
817 A procession and those divine names which are celebrated by us refer to  
one God: some of these are descriptive of the complete providence of  
the one God while others are descriptive of its universal and particular  
providences.

3

Most likely someone will say in contrast to this: why is life not extended beyond being and wisdom extended beyond life, since living beings are extended beyond<sup>2</sup> mere beings, sensible beings are extended beyond living beings, rational beings are extended beyond sensible beings, and the intellects are extended beyond rational beings—for these last beings are about God and nearer to it than the others? For  
B is it not evident that those beings which participate in greater gifts of God are both superior to and preeminent to the rest? Now if someone were to suppose the intellects are without being and lifeless then their discourse would be true. But if the divine intellects are be-ing beyond the rest, are living beyond all that live, think and know beyond all sensation and reason, and participate in and are returned to the beautiful and good beyond all that is, then they are more greatly about the good than these others. This is so because of their extraordinary reception of many and great gifts from God.

In a similar way, rational beings exceed sensible beings in virtue of the abundance of their reason; sensible beings in virtue of sensation, and living beings in virtue of their life.<sup>3</sup> Now I believe this to be true: a being is nearer to God and more divine than the rest by more greatly  
C participating in the one and unlimitedly-giving God.

4

Since we are discussing these matters, let us celebrate the good as really be-ing, and as producing being for all beings together.

In a power beyond being  
the be-ing of the whole *being*<sup>4</sup> is

<sup>2</sup> ὑπερεκτεινομένης or “exceed.”

<sup>3</sup> ὥσπερ καὶ τὰ λογικὰ τῶν αἰσθητικῶν ὑπέρχει πλεουεκτοῦντα τῇ περρεσίᾳ τοῦ λογού, καὶ ταῦτα τῇ αἰσθήσει καὶ ἀλλὰ τῇ ζωῇ. The sense of this last clause seems to be: sensible beings exceed living beings in virtue of their sensation. Living beings exceed mere beings in virtue of their life.

<sup>4</sup> ὁ ὢν ὅλου τοῦ εἶναι. The motivation for ὁ ὢν seems to be Exod. 3:14 where God is revealed to Moses as εἰμι ὁ ὢν. See D.N. I.6.596Aff for Ps-D.’s citation of this text. We find an increased usage of phrases such as τὸ εἶναι, αὐτὸ τὸ εἶναι, and αὐτο καθ’ αὐτὸ τὸ εἶναι. The latter two phrases are singularly translated as “being itself” and “being itself in itself” respectively.



support, cause and creator  
of be-ing, constitution,  
being, and nature.  
source and measure  
of what is eternal,  
be-ingness of what is temporal,<sup>5</sup>  
eternity of what is,  
time of what comes to be,  
the *being* of whatsoever is,  
genesis of whatsoever comes to be.

From out of be-ing:<sup>6</sup>  
eternity, being, be-ing,  
time, genesis, becoming,  
what is in beings,  
whatsoever is constituted and subsisting.<sup>7</sup>

God is  
not somehow be-ing,  
but simply and unlimitedly be-ing,  
comprehending and anticipating  
the whole *being* in itself.  
(Thus it is called)  
king of what is eternal,  
for it has subsisted  
all *being* and be-ing  
in it and about it.<sup>8</sup>

D

Moreover, God  
neither was,  
nor will be,  
nor has come to be,  
nor is come to be  
nor will come to be,  
nor, indeed, is not;  
but is the *being* for beings.  
Not only beings but even  
the being itself for beings  
is from the be-ing before eternity.

<sup>5</sup> ὀντότης χρόνων. This marks the only occurrence of ὀντότης in Ps.-D.'s corpus; its meaning is unclear.

<sup>6</sup> ἐκ τοῦ ὄντος. τοῦ ὄντος refers to ὁ ὢν.

<sup>7</sup> See St. Thomas, S.T. I-II.79.2c; *De Malo* I.2c.

<sup>8</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Malo* 16.9.5m; S.C.G. I.28.267; S.T. I.4.2c, 80.1c, III.13.1c.

For God is

the eternity of what is eternal,  
the one who is begun before what is eternal.<sup>9</sup>

5

820 A

Resuming again, we declare that the *being* for all beings and what is eternal, as well as every eternity and time, are from out of the before be-ing.<sup>10</sup> The before be-ing is source and cause of every eternity, every time and every being whatever. All partake of it and there is no being which stands away from it. It is before all, having comprehended the all in itself.<sup>11</sup> If anything whatsoever is, it is, is thought of, and is conserved in it.

B

*Being* is projected before every other participation<sup>12</sup> of the before be-ing. *Being* itself in itself is prior to the *being* of life itself, the *being* of wisdom itself, and the *being* of the divine similarity.<sup>13</sup> Further, everything that participates in these participates in *being* before all of these. Even the all itself in itself,<sup>14</sup> of which beings partake, participates being itself in itself. Nothing is be-ing of which being itself is not the being and eternity.<sup>15</sup>

Naturally, with regard to those beings which are more primordial, God is celebrated as be-ing in reference to his eldest gifts. The before *being* and beyond *being*, before having and beyond having, has first subsisted the *being* of the all (I mean: being itself in itself), and by this same *being* has initially subsisted all that which in whatsoever way is.<sup>16</sup> Thus all the sources of beings are and are sources by participating in *being*; they are first since they are sources.

If one wishes, life itself is the source of what lives as living; simi-

<sup>9</sup> αὐτὸς γὰρ ἐστὶν ὁ αἰὼν τῶν αἰώνων, ὁ ὑπάρχων πρὸ τῶν αἰώνων. In this passage ὑπάρχω seems to have the sense of "to begin."

<sup>10</sup> παρὰ τοῦ προόντος. The before be-ing is ὁ πρόων.

<sup>11</sup> See Colos. 1:17.

<sup>12</sup> "Participation" translates ἡ μετοχή. This term is to be contrasted with τὸ μετεχόντον ("participant") and τὸ μεταχομένον ("what is participated"). μετοχή is better translated as "participating"; this more clearly emphasizes the dynamic intention of this word.

<sup>13</sup> καὶ ἐστὶν αὐτὸ καθ' αὐτὸ τὸ εἶναι πρεσβύτερον τοῦ αὐτοζῶν εἶναι καὶ αὐτοσοφίαν εἶναι καὶ αὐτοσμοιότητα θεῖαν εἶναι. Other translations of phrases such as τὸ αὐτοζῶν εἶναι are "life itself being" or "being as life itself."

<sup>14</sup> αὐτὰ καθ' αὐτὰ πάντα.

<sup>15</sup> See St. Thomas, S.T. I.4.2.3m, 44.3.4a, 54.2c, 75.5.4m.

<sup>16</sup> καὶ γὰρ τὸ προεῖναι καὶ ὑπερεῖναι προέχων καὶ ὑπερέχων τὸ εἶναι πᾶν, αὐτὸ φήμι καθ' αὐτὸ τὸ εἶναι, προυπεστήσατο καὶ τῷ εἶναι αὐτῷ πᾶν τὸ ὅπως οὖν ὄν ὑπεστήσατο. Here, προυπεστήσατο seems to have the sense of "initially subsisted" rather than "before subsisting."

larity itself [is the source] of what is similar as similar; unity itself of what is unified as unified; and order itself of what is ordered as ordered. In regard to others, whatever participates in this or that or both or many is this or that or both or many. You will find the participations themselves first of all participate in *being* and abide by *being*. Thus they are the sources of this or that and, by participating in *being*, both are and are what is participated in. Further, if these are by participating in *being*, it is all the more needful that the other participations in them [participate] in *being*.<sup>17</sup>

C

6

The beyond goodness itself<sup>18</sup>—projecting the first gift of being itself—is celebrated by the earlier of its participations. Being itself, the sources of beings, all beings, and whatever is supported by beings are incomprehensibly, comprehensively, and singly out of it and in it. For all numbers have subsisted beforehand in the unit; the unit has every number uniformly in itself. All numbers are unified in the unit; insofar as they go forth from the unit they are differentiated and made many. Again, all the lines of a circle subsist together in the center of a circle in one unity; the point uniformly has all the straight lines in itself both among themselves and with respect to the one source from which they proceed.<sup>19</sup>

D

821 A

These are completely unified in the center of a circle itself. If they stand away from it a small distance, they are slightly differentiated; if they stand away a great distance they are more greatly differentiated. And, simply, insofar as they draw near to the center they are unified to it and to one another; but insofar as they stand away from it, they are differentiated from it and from one another.<sup>20</sup>

7

All the logoi of the natures of each individual are comprehended in the whole nature of the totality in one unconfused unity.<sup>21</sup> The powers which provide for all the parts of the whole body are uniformly comprehended in the soul. There is nothing absurd in going up from

B

<sup>17</sup> καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ὅσα τοῦδε ἢ τοῦδε ἢ ἀμφοτέρων ἢ παλλῶν μετέχοντα, τότε ἢ τότε ἢ ἀμφοτέρα ἢ πολλά ἐστι, τὰς αὐτομετοχὰς εὐρήσεις τοῦ εἶναι πρῶτον αὐτὰς μετεχοῦσας καὶ τῷ εἶναι πρῶτον μένουσας, ἔπειτα τοῦδε ἢ τοῦδε ἀρχὰς οὐσας καὶ τῷ μετέχειν τοῦ εἶναι καὶ οὐσας καὶ μετεχομένας. See St. Thomas, *De Ver.* 22.6.1m, 11.4sc; S.T. I.75.5.1a.

<sup>18</sup> ἡ αὐτοῦπεραγαθότης.

<sup>19</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Ver.* 8.10.3m.

<sup>20</sup> See St. Thomas, S.C.G. III.20.2014; S.T. I.76.5c.

<sup>21</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Ver.* 3.2.7a.

the most obscure images to the cause of all to contemplate with super-cosmic eyes both the all and those which are opposed to one another in the cause of all in a uniform and unified way. For it is the source of being. From out of it comes being itself, all beings whatever, every wisdom, every source, every limit, every life, every immortality, every order, every harmony, every power, every projection, every foundation, every thinking, every intellection, every logos, every sensation, every condition, every rest, every motion, every unity, every mixture, every friendship, every agreement, every difference, every definition, and everything whatever which is in virtue of *being* and which characterizes all beings.

C

8

From out of the same cause of all emerge all the intelligible and intelligent beings<sup>22</sup> of the divinely formed angels, the natures of souls, the natures of the whole world, and everything whatever which is said either to have [its] constitution in others or to be conceived.<sup>23</sup> Indeed, the all holy and eldest powers, which are truly beings,<sup>24</sup> are founded, as it were, in the vestibule of the Trinity beyond being. They have both *being* and divinely formed *being* from this cause and in it. After these beings come both those beings which are subordinate and last with respect to angels; they exist in a subordinate and last way. However, with respect to us they exist in a super cosmic way.<sup>25</sup> According to the same logos, souls and all other beings have *being* and good *being*. They are and are good by having *being* from the before be-ing and by be-ing and be-ing good in it. They are begun from out of it; they are protected in it; they are limited by it. Those which are eldest distribute *being* to the greater beings,<sup>26</sup> which the writings call eternal. However, being itself is in no way left out of all beings.

D

824 A

Being itself is  
from out of the before be-ing.  
*Being* is of it;  
it is not of *being*  
*Being* is in it;  
it is not in *being*.

<sup>22</sup> οὐσίαι.

<sup>23</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Ver.* 2.8.1.

<sup>24</sup> οὐσίαι.

<sup>25</sup> καὶ μετ' ἐκείνας αἱ ὑφειμέναι τὸ ὑφειμένως καὶ αἱ ἔσχαται τὸ ἐσχάτως ὡς πρὸς ἀγγέλους, ὡς πρὸς ἡμᾶς δὲ ὑπερκοσμίως.

<sup>26</sup> οὐσίαι.

*Being* has it;  
it does not have *being*.<sup>27</sup>

It is  
eternity, source, and measure of *being*  
be-ing before being, be-ing, and eternity,  
being-producing beginning, middle,  
and end of all.

Thus in the writings, the really before be-ing  
is multiplied according to every  
conception of beings;  
these are properly celebrated of it:  
was, is, will be,  
has come to be, is coming to be, and  
will come to be.<sup>28</sup>

For those who think in a divinely suitable way  
all of these signify  
the beyond-beingly *being* itself, and  
cause of all which is everywhere,  
according to every conception.

For it is not this  
but not that;  
it is not in some way  
but not in some other way.

It is  
cause of all:  
co-having and before-having in itself  
all the sources and ends of all beings;  
beyond all:  
beyond be-ing-beyond-beingly-before-all.<sup>29</sup>

Hence all are at once said of it:  
it is nothing among all—  
all-structure, all-form,  
non-form, non-beauty.

<sup>27</sup> καὶ αὐτὸ δὲ τὸ εἶναι ἐκ τοῦ προόντος καὶ αὐτοῦ ἐστὶ τὸ εἶναι καὶ οὐκ αὐτὸς τοῦ εἶναι καὶ ἐν αὐτῷ ἐστὶ τὸ εἶναι καὶ οὐκ αὐτὸς ἐν τῷ εἶναι καὶ αὐτὸν ἔχει τὸ εἶναι καὶ οὐκ αὐτὸς ἔχει τὸ εἶναι.

<sup>28</sup> καὶ τὸ ἦν ἐπ' αὐτῷ καὶ τὸ ἔστι καὶ τὸ ἔσται καὶ τὸ ἐγένετο καὶ γίνεται καὶ γενήσεται κυρίως ὑμνεῖται.

<sup>29</sup> ἀλλὰ πάντα ἐστὶν ὡς πάντων αἶτος καὶ ἐν αὐτῷ πᾶσας ἀρχάς, πάντα συμπεράσματα πάντων τῶν οὐτῶν συνέχων καὶ προέχων. καὶ ὑπερ τὰ πάντα ἐστὶν ὡς πρὸ πάντων ὑπερουσίως ὑπερῶν.

It separately and incomprehensibly  
anticipates in itself  
the beginnings, means, and ends of beings.  
It purely illuminates the *being* for all  
in one, more than unified causality.<sup>30</sup>

C For if our sun, likewise itself a one, uniform, and illuminating light renews, nourishes, protects, completes, differentiates, unifies, flourishes, and makes fecund, leads along, produces, increases, changes, establishes, generates, elevates, and enlivens all the sensible beings and qualities which are many and diverse, and if each member of the whole participates in one and the same sun in a way appropriate to itself, and if this one sun has uniformly anticipated in itself all the causes of the many which participate in it—then how much more must one concede that all the paradigms of beings subsisted beforehand in the cause of the sun and all other beings according to one unity beyond being. For this cause brings forth being in the going out of being.<sup>31</sup> Now we call the paradigms the being-producing logoi which singly subsist beforehand in God.<sup>32</sup> The theology calls these the pre-determining, divine, and good wills which are determinative and productive of being. The beyond being has pre-determined and brought forth all beings according to these.<sup>33</sup>

9

D If the worthy philosopher Clement for some reason declares that the paradigms are the more primal among beings, his discourse does not proceed according to a proper, complete, and simple naming. For one must concede that this is rightly said by remembering what the  
825 A theology has demonstrated: "I have not demonstrated these things to you that you might excel them" but that we shall be led through the analogical knowledge of these to the cause of all, as far as this is possible for us.<sup>34</sup>

To the cause of all beings as  
the one unity apart from all,  
are all beings to be attributed.

<sup>30</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Pot.* 9.7.2a; *De Spir. Creat.* 8c; *S.T.* I.4.2c.2m.

<sup>31</sup> ἐπεὶ καὶ οὐσίας παράγει, κατὰ τὴν ἀπὸ οὐσίας ἑκβάσιν. See St. Thomas, *De Ver.* 5.9.2sc, 10.10.6m, 20.4c.5c.

<sup>32</sup> παραδείγματα δὲ φάμεν εἶναι τοὺς ἐν θεῷ τῶν ὄντων οὐσιοποιούς καὶ ἐνιαυίως προϋφιστάμενους. We might also translate this as "We call the paradigms the being producing logoi which, before subsisting, are singly in God."

<sup>33</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Ver.* 3.1c, 4.2sc, 6.3a; *S.T.* I.15.3.2a.

<sup>34</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Ver.* 3.2c.7c, 8.8c.1a; 18.1.7n; *De Anima* 18.7sc; *S.C.G.* I.54.461.

For it  
 begins from the *being* of the  
 being producing procession of goodness,  
 goes through all,  
 fills all from out of the  
*being* of itself,<sup>35</sup> and  
 rejoices in all.

The cause of all  
 anticipates all in itself,  
 rejects all doubleness in  
 an excess of simplicity  
 —in like manner—  
 it encompasses all in its  
 unlimitedness beyond simplicity:  
 just as a sound which is one and the  
 same is participated in by many  
 ears as one.

10

The before be-ing is  
 source and end of all beings;  
 source as cause,  
 end as  
 the for the sake of which,  
 limit of all,  
 the unlimited of every  
 unlimited and limit,  
 preeminently of those opposed to it.<sup>36</sup>  
 (As has been often said)  
 it anticipates and has subsisted  
 all beings in unity,  
 presencing everywhere to all  
 according to the one, the same,  
 and the all itself.<sup>37</sup>

The before be-ing  
 proceeds to all,  
 abides in itself,

B

<sup>35</sup> καὶ πάντα ἐξ ἑαυτῆς τοῦ εἶναι πληροῦσα.

<sup>36</sup> ἀπειρία πάσης ἀπειρίας καὶ περάτος, ὑπεροχικῶς, τῶν ὡς ἀντικειμένων.

<sup>37</sup> παρὼν τοῖς πᾶσι, καὶ πανταχοῦ καὶ κατὰ τὸ ἓν καὶ τὸ αὐτὸ καὶ τὸ αὐτὸ πᾶν.  
 τὸ αὐτὸ πᾶν might also be translated as "the same all."

stands and moves,  
neither stands nor moves,  
does not have beginning, middle, or end,  
is not something in beings,  
is not something away from beings, and  
neither in general does there pertain to it  
any of those which are eternal  
or subsist temporally.  
But it is the eternity of time  
and apart from all those  
in eternity and time.  
Wherefore, eternity itself and beings  
and the measures and what is measured of beings  
are through it and by it.

C I will speak more adequately about these matters at another time.



CHAPTER VI  
CONCERNING LIFE

856 A

1

Let us now celebrate the eternal life which is that from out of which life itself and every life comes and is that by which life is disseminated to all those whatever which participate in life in a manner appropriate to each.<sup>1</sup> Thus the life and immortality of the immortal angels and the very indestructibleness of their continuous angelic motions are and have subsisted from out of it and through it. They are called immortal for they are always living yet again they are not called immortal since they do not have immortal being and eternal life from themselves but from the life producing cause which is productive and conservative of every life.

B

Now just as we say that in respect of be-ing, that eternity is of *being* itself, so we say again in this case that the divine life beyond every life gives life and subsistence to life itself. Indeed, every life and enlivened motion is from out of the life beyond every life and every source of life.<sup>2</sup> From out of this life souls have their indestructibility and animals and plants, as the last echoes of life, have life. According to the writings, if the divine life were done away with there would be a lack of all life. However, those which have lacked it by a weakness in participating it are returned again to it and have come to be living.<sup>3</sup>

C

2

First, the *being* of life<sup>4</sup> is given to life itself and every life; the *being* appropriate to each according to what it is to be by nature is given to each individual. An immaterial, divinely formed, unchangeable, immortal, and continuous strong and unimpaired motion is given to the super celestial lives. This is exceedingly extended even to demonic life through abundant goodness; for this life does not have its *being* from another cause but has the *being* of life and constancy from the divine life.

<sup>1</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Ver.* 7.5.3a.

<sup>2</sup> See St. Thomas, *S.T.* II-II.179.1.3a.

<sup>3</sup> See St. Thomas, *S.T.* I.18.1sc.

<sup>4</sup> τὸ εἶναι ζωῆν.

It grants an angelically formed life to be received into men insofar as they are mixed together with the divine life. It lets us cease from wandering and returns and recalls us into itself. Indeed, and this is more divine, it promises to transfer our whole soul and, I say, conjoined body to an all complete and immortal life. These matters which perhaps seemed contrary to nature to those in antiquity seem truthful, divine and beyond nature to you and me. Now I say that our visible nature is beyond nature; I do not say this of the omnipotence of the divine life.<sup>5</sup> For no life is contrary to nature or beyond nature in respect of the divine life taken as the nature of all that lives, especially of those that are more divine. Thus the statements of the deranged Simion which oppose this matter are to be driven far from this divine assembly and from your sacred soul. Now I imagine that he thinks that his statements are true. However this escaped his notice: it is necessary for those who think rightly not to employ the apparent logoi of the senses against the unmanifest cause of all. Thus we must say to him that his statements are contrary to nature; for nothing is opposed to nature.<sup>6</sup>

### 3

B Every animal and plant is enlivened and fostered from out of it. Further, every life whatsoever—whether you speak of intellectual, rational, sensible, nutritive or generative life<sup>7</sup>—every source of life, and every being of life lives and is enlivened from the [divine life] beyond all life. Before subsisting, all life is uniformly in it according to causality.<sup>8</sup> For the life which is source of life and beyond-living is cause of every life, generative of every life, and is complete and divisible of every life. It is to be celebrated in terms of all living things according to the multiple fecundity of what lives as manifold, contemplated, and celebrated by every life, without lack, over full of life,<sup>9</sup> self living,<sup>10</sup> produced of life, beyond every life, beyond living,<sup>11</sup> and however else one might humanly celebrate the unspeakable life.

<sup>5</sup> ὑπὲρ φύσιν δὲ τὴν καθ' ἡμᾶς φήμι τὴν ὁρωμένην, οὐ τὴν πανσθεῆ τῆς θείας ζωῆς. καὶ τοῦτο ἔστι ρητέον αὐτῷ, τὸ παρὰ φύσιν εἰπεῖν αὐτῇ γὰρ οὐδὲν ἐναντίον.

<sup>7</sup> See Proclus, *El.Th.* 39.145; *de dec dub* I.118.

<sup>8</sup> See St. Thomas, *S.T.* I-II.5.1.1a, II-II.8.1.2a.

<sup>9</sup> ὑπερπλήρης ζωῆς.

<sup>10</sup> ἡ αὐτόζωος.

<sup>11</sup> ὑπέρζωος.

## CHAPTER VII

### CONCERNING WISDOM, INTELLECT, LOGOS, TRUTH, AND FAITH

865 A

#### 1

Come then if you will and we will celebrate the good and eternal life as wisdom, wisdom itself and, even greater, as giver of subsistence to every wisdom and as beyond being beyond every wisdom and understanding.<sup>1</sup> For God is not only over full of wisdom such that there is no number of his understanding, but he is even founded beyond<sup>2</sup> every logos, intellect, and wisdom. That divine man who is common to us and our teacher has brilliantly conceived this when he says that "the foolishness of God is wiser than men."<sup>3</sup> This means not only that every human thinking is in some sort of wandering when it is judged in respect of the steadfastness and stability of the divine and most complete intellects, but that it is usual for the theologians to deny any kind of privation with respect to God.

B

Thus the writings call the completely lit light "invisible"; they call that which is greatly celebrated and many named "ineffable and nameless." They call that which is present in all and discoverable from all "incomprehensible and inscrutable." For this reason it is even now said that the divine Apostle celebrates the foolishness of God by calling it that which appears contrary to reason and absurd in itself but which leads us to the ineffable truth before all logos.<sup>4</sup>

C

As I have said in other places, we are deceived into following an apparently divine and ineffable logos when we receive what is beyond us in a way that is familiar to us, when we become entangled in what is native to our sensations, and when we reject what is divine for what is ours. Now it is necessary to know that our intellect has a power toward thinking, through which it sees the intelligibles and sees that the unity through which the intellect is joined to what is beyond it is

D

<sup>1</sup> καὶ ὑπὲρ πασάν σοφίαν καὶ σύνεσιν ὑπερουῖσαν.

<sup>2</sup> More properly: beyond what is founded.

<sup>3</sup> I Cor. 1:25.

<sup>4</sup> μωρίαν θεοῦ τὸ φαινόμενον ἐν αὐτῇ παράλογον καὶ ἄτοπον εἰς τὴν ἄρρητὸν καὶ πρὸ λόγου παντὸς ἀναγαγὼν ἀλήθειαν.

beyond the nature of the intellect. In this, therefore, we are not to comprehend God according to us, but we are to stand the whole of ourselves outside of the whole of ourselves, so that we come to be wholly of God.<sup>5</sup> For it is great to be of God and not of ourselves. For thus shall what is divine be given to those who come to be with God.

Preeminently celebrating this foolish wisdom [which is] without logos and without intellect, we shall say that it is cause of every intellect, reason, wisdom, and understanding, that every intention is of it, that every knowledge and understanding is from it, and that the total richness of wisdom and knowledge is hidden in it. Therefore, in consequence of what has already been said, the all wise and more than wise cause is the subsistence of wisdom itself both in totality and in particularity.<sup>6</sup>

## 2

B From this cause the intelligent and intellectual powers of the angelic intellects have simple and blessed intellections.<sup>7</sup> They do not bring together a divine knowledge in parts, from parts, from sensation, or from rational demonstrations, nor do they encompass their knowledge by means of something common in relation to these.<sup>8</sup> Rather they comprehend the intelligible aspects of what is divine in an intellectual, immaterial, and uniform way which is purified from everything that is material and from every multitude.<sup>9</sup> Their intellectual power and activity is resplendent in a pure, unpolluted purity and sees the divine intellections at a glance; for it is patterned after the divine more than wise intellect and logos into an indivisibility, immateriality, and divinely formed unity as far as is possible.<sup>10</sup>

Through the divine wisdom,<sup>11</sup> the souls are possessed of reason. In detail they go round in a circle about the truth of beings; they fall short of divine unitive intellects by the divisibility and manifoldness

C

<sup>5</sup> κατὰ ταύτην οὖν τὰ θεία νοητέον οὐ καθ' ἡμᾶς, ἀλλ' ὅλους ἑαυτοὺς ὅλων ἑαυτῶν ἐξισταμένους καὶ ὅλους θεοῦ γιγνομένους. See Proclus, *in Rep.* p. 59.

<sup>6</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Ver.* 4.5.5sc.

<sup>7</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Malo* 16.6.1sc; *Quod.* VII.3.2.1a.

<sup>8</sup> οὐδὲ ὑπὸ τίνος κοινοῦ πρὸς ταῦτα συμπερεχομένοι.

<sup>9</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Ver.* 2.1.4a.4m, 8.8.8a. 9.1sc.11c, 15.1sc, 18.2.6a; *De Anima* 20c; *De Malo* 16.4.14a.c.6c; 8.15a; *S.T.* I.55.2sc, 56.3.3a, 58.3sc, 76.5c, 79.8c, 84.4.1m, III.11.3.3a.

<sup>10</sup> See Proclus, *de dec dub* I.117ff. See St. Thomas, *S.T.* I.58.4sc.

<sup>11</sup> καὶ σινοπτικῇ τῶν θεῶν νοήσεων ἀμερεία καὶ αὐλία καὶ τῷ θεοειδῶς ἐνὶ πρὸς τὸν θεῖον ὑπέρσοφον νοῦν καὶ λόγον, ὡς ἐφικτόν, ἀποτυπουμένη. διὰ τὴν θείαν σοφίαν καὶ ψυχὰι. We accept the punctuation provided in Dionysiaca I.389<sup>a</sup>-390<sup>a</sup>. In Migne there is a semicolon after ἀποτυπουμένη and a period after σοφίαν. Thus καὶ ψυχὰι begins a new sentence.

of their variety. Yet, to whatever extent this is possible and attainable by souls, they are deemed worthy of intellects equal to the angels in their convolution of the many into one.<sup>12</sup> Indeed, one would not fall short of the mark in calling sensations an echo of wisdom. Even the demonic intellect as intellect is from wisdom. Yet insofar as intellect is deprived of reason in consequence of neither knowing nor willing that which it desires, we must more properly regard it as something which falls away from wisdom.<sup>13</sup>

One must say that the divine wisdom is source, cause, support, completion, protection, and limit of wisdom itself and of every wisdom, intellect, reason, and sensation. But how is God who is more than wise to be celebrated as wisdom, intellect, reason, and knowledge? How is God to comprehend something among the intelligibles since he does not have intellectual activities?<sup>14</sup> How does God, who is established beyond every sensation, know what is sensible? Yet, as the writings say, God knows all and nothing escapes the divine knowledge.

Now as has been often said, it is necessary to understand what is divine in a way that is suitable to divinity. For one must order non-intellect and non-sensibility to God in terms of preeminence and not in terms of defect. Thus one must ascribe non-logos to that beyond logos, non-completion to that beyond completion and before completion; and in terms of a preeminence of visible light, one must ascribe non-manifest and invisible darkness to the inaccessible light.

The divine intellect contains all in a knowledge which is apart from all. For as cause of all, it has anticipated the knowledge of all in itself before the angels came to be knowing; it brings forth the angels, knows all others from within and from out of the source itself (if one may speak thus), and leads all of these into being.<sup>15</sup> I believe that the writing teaches this when it says "He knows all before the genesis of all."<sup>16</sup> For the divine intellect does not know by learning about beings in terms of beings; rather, from itself and in itself it has and comprehends beforehand the understanding, knowledge, and being of all beings according to cause. God does not consider individuals according to kind but knows and contains the all according to the one compass of its causality. In a similar way the light causally anticipates the vision

<sup>12</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Ver.* 18.8.10a; S.T. I.75.7sc, I-II.5.1.1a, II-II.8.1.2a, III.10.4.2a.

<sup>13</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Ver.* 10.1.4a; S.T. I.58.5.3a, II-II.180.3c.

<sup>14</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Ver.* 24.3.1m.

<sup>15</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Ver.* 2.1c.

<sup>16</sup> Dan. 13:42.

of darkness in itself; it does not see the darkness from another [source] than the light.<sup>17</sup>

C In knowing itself the divine wisdom knows all: [it knows] what is material, immaterially; what is divisible, indivisibly; the many, singly. It knows and produces all by its unity. If God imparts *being* to all beings by one causality, it knows all in this single causality as be-ing from out of itself and as in itself before having subsisted. God does not receive a knowledge of beings from beings but will be the provider of the knowledge these beings have of themselves and the knowledge others have of others. Therefore, God does not have an individual knowledge of itself and another knowledge of all beings in common. For knowing itself will the cause of all in any way be ignorant of those which are from it and of which it is the cause?<sup>18</sup> Hence God knows beings by a knowledge of God, and not by a knowledge of beings. For, as the writings say, even those which are upon the earth know angels according to the proper power and nature of the divinely formed intellect and not according to sensation. For according to sensation they know sensible beings.<sup>19</sup>

3

D After this it is necessary for us to investigate how we know God, which is neither intelligible, sensible, nor in general some being among beings.<sup>20</sup> It is never true to say that we know God in terms of its nature, for this is unknown, and exceeds all logos and intellect. We know God in terms of the order of all beings which are projected out of it and which have some similarity and likeness to its divine paradigms.

872 A

According to our power,  
we attain to that beyond all  
by a path and order  
in the denial and preeminence of all, and  
in the cause of all.<sup>21</sup>

God is known  
in all, and  
apart from all.

<sup>17</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Ver.* 1.5c; 2.5.10a, 3.1.6a,6m; *S.T.* I.14.10c, 15.1.1a.

<sup>18</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Ver.* 2.3.3m.

<sup>19</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Ver.* 2.3.5m, 8.8.7a, 10.4a, 14.6m; *S.T.* I.55.1.1a.

<sup>20</sup> See Proclus, *Pl.Th.* II.5. p. 33.

<sup>21</sup> εἰς τὸ ἐπέκεινα πάντων ὁδῶ καὶ τάξει κατὰ δύναμιν ἀνειμὲν ἐν τῇ πάντων ἀφαιρέσει καὶ ὑπεροχῇ καὶ ἐν τῇ πάντων αἰτία.

God is known  
through knowledge, and  
through unknowing.

Of God there is  
intellect, reason, knowledge,  
contact, sensation, opinion, imagination, name, and  
everything else.

God is  
not known, not spoken, not named,  
not something among beings, and  
not known in something among beings.

God is  
all in all,  
nothing in none,  
known to all in reference to all,  
known to no one in reference to nothing.  
For we say all of this correctly about God  
who is celebrated according  
to the analogy of all,  
of which it is the cause.

The most divine knowledge of God is  
one which knows through unknowing  
in the unity beyond intellect  
when the intellect stands away from beings  
and then stands away from itself,  
it is united to the more than resplendent rays,  
and is then and there illumined  
by the inscrutable depths of wisdom.

B

Nevertheless, as we have said,  
it is known from all;  
(for according to the writings)  
it is  
productive of all,  
always harmonizing the all,  
cause of the indissoluble  
concordance and harmony of all,  
always joining together  
the end of those which are prior to

the beginnings of secondaries,<sup>22</sup> and  
beautifying the agreement and harmony of all.<sup>23</sup>

4

- C The sacred writings do not only celebrate God as logos because it is the provider of logos, intellect, and wisdom. They also celebrate it as logos because it has uniformly anticipated in itself the causes of all, because it goes through all extending (as the writings say) to the end of all, and because before these the divine logos is simplified beyond every simplicity and is absolved from all: beyond all as beyond being.<sup>24</sup> This logos is the simple and really be-ing truth concerning which, as a pure and unerring knowledge of the whole, there is the divine faith: a steadfast foundation which establishes those who have believed and have the simple knowledge of the truth of what is believed in the truth and the truth in them in an unchangeable identity.<sup>25</sup> For if knowledge unifies those who comprehend with what is comprehended, but ignorance is always a cause of change and self separation for the one who is ignorant, then according to the sacred logos nothing will remove the one who has believed in the truth from dwelling in true faith in which he who believes has the stability of an unmoved and immutable identity.
- D

873 A For he who has been unified with the truth knows well that it is well with him although the many will admonish him as having been ecstatic. For while it is hidden to them as an image that he has gone away from error to truth through his genuine faith, he truly knows—against what they say—that he is not mad but that he has been freed from the unstable and changeable journey around the many shaped varieties of error. For he has a simple truth which is always the same and always in the same way.<sup>26</sup>

Thus the early leaders of our divine wisdom of God, who are dying every day on behalf of the truth, testify as is natural and by every word and deed to the single knowledge of the truth of the Christians: that it is simpler and more divine than all and, indeed, that it is the abiding, true, one, and single knowledge of God.

<sup>22</sup> See Proclus, *El.Th.* 33, 147; in *Crat.* p. 74, 91; *Pl.Th.* III.9, p. 135.

<sup>23</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Ver.* 14.1.9m, 15.1c, 16.1c; *De Anima* 1.17a; *De Spir. Creat.* 6.1a; *De Malo* 16.1.4a; *Quod.* VI.11.1c; *S.C.G.* 1.57.489, II.68.1453, III.97.2725; *S.T.* I.78.2c, 110.3c, I-II.2.8.1a, II-II.52.2.1a, 188.6c.

<sup>24</sup> καὶ πρὸ γε τούτων, ὅτι πάσης ἀπλότητος ὁ θεῖος ἐπερήπλωται λόγος, καὶ πάντων ἐστὶν ὑπὲρ πάντα κατὰ τὸ ὑπερούσιον ἀπολελυμένος.

<sup>25</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Ver.* 14.1.5a.2c, 8.1sc; *S.T.* II-II.1.1sc, 4.1c.

<sup>26</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Ver.* 14.8c.



## CHAPTER VIII

### CONCERNING POWER, JUSTICE, SALVATION, AND REDEMPTION; IN WHICH INEQUALITY IS DISCUSSED

889 B

#### 1

Since the theologians celebrate the truest and more than wise divine wisdom as power and as justice and also call it savior and redemption, let us unfold these divine names as far as is possible for us. Now I do not imagine that any who are conversant in the divine writings are ignorant that the godhead is apart from and is preeminent to every power, however be-ing and conceived.<sup>1</sup> For the theology has often granted the name "Lord" to it, thus separating it from all super celestial powers. But how do the theologians celebrate that which is apart from every power as power? How are we to receive the name of power in respect of that apart from every power?

C

#### 2

We say that God is power as  
before-having and beyond-having  
every power in itself,  
cause of every power,  
bringing forth all  
in an unlimited and undefined power,  
be-ing cause of the *being* itself of power  
whether universal or particular,<sup>2</sup>  
unlimited power,  
for not only does it bring forth every power;  
it is beyond every power  
—even power itself,  
and it prevails over and unlimitedly brings forth  
unlimited [powers] which are  
other than those which are

D

<sup>1</sup> See Proclus, in *Parm.* VI.215.

<sup>2</sup> καὶ ὡς αὐτοῦ τοῦ εἶναι δύναμιν ἢ τὴν ὅλην ἢ τὴν καθ' ἑκάστον αἴτιος ὄν.

such that these powers  
 even if brought forth to infinity  
 would not be able to blunt  
 the more than unlimited production  
 of its power-producing power.<sup>3</sup>

It is  
 an unspeakable, unknown,  
 and inconceivable power,  
 beyond-having all,  
 which, through abundance of power,  
 empowers the weak and  
 conserves and preserves the last beings  
 which are echoes of its power.

In a similar manner and with regard to sensible powers, we see that an exceedingly bright light penetrates even the dullest vision, and that loud sounds enter into ears which are not easily receptive to sounds. For that which is completely without hearing is not the sense of hearing. That completely without vision is not the sense of sight.<sup>4</sup>

## 3

B Thus the infinite power distribution itself of God<sup>5</sup> proceeds into all beings, and there is no being which is completely devoid of having some power—whether this be intellectual, rational, sensible, living, or merely existential power.<sup>6</sup> And, if it be lawful so to say, being itself has power to be from the power beyond being.<sup>7</sup>

## 4

C The divinely formed powers of the angelic orders are from out of it. They also have an unchangeable *being* from it as well as their intellectual, immortal, and continuous motions, their very strength, and their undiminished desire for the good. From the infinitely good power of what it sends to them they have received their power, their *being*, themselves, their desire always to be, and their very power to desire always to be.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>3</sup> See Proclus, in *Crat.* pp. 57, 58, 65, 89.

<sup>4</sup> τὸ γὰρ πάντῃ ἀνήκουν οὐδὲ ἀκοή. καὶ τὸ καθόλου μὴ βλέπον οὐδὲ ὄρασιν.

<sup>5</sup> αὕτῃ δε οὖν ἡ ἀπειροδύναμος τοῦ θεοῦ διάδοσις.

<sup>6</sup> οὐσιώδη δύναμιν: See Proclus, *El.Th.* 39,145; *de dec dub* I.118.

<sup>7</sup> καὶ αὐτὸ δὲ, εἰ θέμις εἰπεῖν, τὸ εἶναι δύναμιν εἰς τὸ εἶναι εἶχει παρὰ τῆς ὑπερ-  
 ουσίου δυνάμεως.

<sup>8</sup> πρὸς τῆς ἀπειραγάθου δυνάμεως εἰλήφασιν αὐτῆς ἐφείσης αὐτοῖς τὸ δύνασθαι  
 καὶ τὸ εἶναι ταῦτα καὶ ἐφίεσθαι αἰεὶ εἶναι καὶ αὐτὸ τὸ δύνασθαι ἐφίεσθαι τοῦ αἰεὶ  
 δύνασθαι.

Further, what pertains to the uneclipsed power proceeds even into men, animals, plants, and the whole nature of all. It strengthens those which are unified toward their friendship and communion with one another. It keeps those which are distinct both unconfused and un-mixed, so that each is according to its proper logos and definition. It preserves the orders and directions of all for the proper good of each. It protects the undying immaculate lives of the angelic unities. It keeps the beings and orders of the heavens, stars, and celestial lights unchanged and produces their power to be eternal. It keeps the revolutions of time separate from its procession and brings together its complete restitution. It produces the inextinguishable power of fire and the flowing of water. It determines the stream of air; it founds the earth on nothing; and it protects the earth in its life giving travails. It keeps the harmony and mixture of the elements with one another unconfused and without division. It conserves the joining of the soul and body. It moves the nutritive and growing powers of plants. It holds the essential powers of the whole, for it secures the undissolved abiding of the all. It gives the deification of itself by providing the power for those who are being deified. In general, nothing at all among beings is separated from the almighty securing and encompassing of the divine powers. For that which universally has no power neither is nor is something, nor is there any position of it at all.<sup>9</sup>

D

893 A

Nevertheless, the great Elymas says, "If God is all powerful, why is it said by your theologian that God is not able to do some things?" But this is an abuse of what the divine Paul says: "God is not able to refuse himself." I greatly fear to advance this lest I reap laughter for the folly of attempting to destroy the weak houses built upon sand during a child's play or, as it were, to seem as if I were pursuing some inaccessible intention of his theological thinking concerning this matter.

B

For the refusal of God is a falling away from the truth. But truth is be-ing; thus, the falling away from the truth is a falling away from be-ing. If therefore, truth is be-ing and the refusal of truth is a falling away from be-ing, then God is not able to fall away from be-ing and not *being* is not. As one might say: non-possibility is not possible and not knowing is not knowing according to privation.<sup>10</sup> The wise person

C

<sup>9</sup> τὸ γὰρ καθόλου μηδεμίαν δύναμιν ἔχον οὔτε ἔστιν οὔτε τί ἔστιν οὔτε ἐστὶ τις αὐτοῦ παντελῶς θέσις.

<sup>10</sup> ὥς ἂν τις φαίη τὸ μὴ δύνασθαι οὐ δύναται καὶ τὸ μὴ εἰδέναι κατὰ στέρησιν οὐκ οἶδεν.

who has not understood this imitates those who are unskilled in fighting and who frequently suppose their opponents to be weak. These persons courageously do battle in the absence of their opponents by confidently striking the air with empty blows. They then declare themselves victors, although they do not know the power of their opponents.

D But we, who consider theology as far as is attainable, will celebrate the God beyond power as all powerful, as a blessed and one ruler, as ruling in the kingdom of eternity itself, as in no way falling from beings but rather as beyond having and before having all beings in a power beyond being. It is the power to be and the *being* for all beings according to the wealth of its excessive power, which has been given in an ungrudging stream.

7

896 A And again, God is celebrated as justice by distributing what is due to all and by determining the symmetry, beauty, good order, regulation, every apportionment, and the orders for each being according to the really be-ing and most just definition. Further, God is cause of the individual doings of each being,<sup>11</sup> for the divine justice purely and without confoundment orders and defines and maintains all from all; it gives what is proper to each being according to the conceived need of each being.

B If we are speaking of these matters rightly, those who rail against the divine justice unknowingly convict themselves of a distinct injustice, for they say that immortality is due to mortals, completion is due to those which are non-complete, that there is a necessity of being moved by others for those who move themselves, sameness is due to those who become other, a complete power is due to those who are weak, eternity is due to those beings in time, unchangeableness is due to those who change by nature, and that temporary pleasures should be everlasting. In general they believe that what is given to some belongs to others. It is necessary to know that the divine justice is a really true justice, since it distributes those things which are proper to each being according to what is due to each being, and since it preserves the nature of each in its proper order and power.<sup>12</sup>

8

But someone might say that it is not a mark of justice to permit those who are holy to remain helpless when they are exhausted by those who are evil. To this we must say that if those whom you call

<sup>11</sup> See Proclus, in *Remp.* p. 25. See St. Thomas, *S.T.* II-II.175.1.2a.

<sup>12</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Ver.* 13.1.4a.

holy love the things which are zealously sought after upon the earth by those who are inclined towards matter then they have fallen away completely from the love of God. Moreover, I do not know how they could be called holy since they are unjust to what is truly lovable and divine. From them what is truly lovable and divine is not rightly exalted above what is unenviable and unlovable. But if they love what really is, they who desire something ought to rejoice when they have attained their desire. For are they not nearer to the angelic virtues when they withdraw as far as possible from their experience of material beings in their desire of divine things and are exceedingly and courageously exercised in this by their trials on behalf of the beautiful? Thus it is true to say that this is indeed a property of the divine justice: it neither charms nor destroys the strength of the best persons through gifts of material things nor, if someone should attempt to produce this, does it permit their helplessness. Rather, it establishes them in the beautiful and cruel<sup>13</sup> rest and distributes to them those beings which are due to them.<sup>14</sup>

C

9

Thus the divine justice is celebrated as the preservation of the whole. It preserves and guards the individual and pure being and order of each being from the others; it is purely the cause of the individual or proper doings of each being in the whole. Now if someone were to celebrate this preservation as that which savingly rescues the whole from those things which are worse, we would wholly accept this celebration of the manifold preservation. Moreover we would deem this celebration worthy to be defined as the first preservation of the whole which preserves all beings in themselves as unchanged, undisturbed by faction, and not declined towards what is worse. It protects all without strife and without war by thoroughly ordering the logos of each of these. It expels every inequality and the doing of what is another's from the whole.<sup>15</sup> It brings together the analogies of each as free from change and migration into what is opposed to each.

897 A

Further, and as not apart from the intention of the sacred theology, one might indeed celebrate this preservation as redeeming all beings from falling away from their own good—insofar as the nature of each being is receptive to this preservation—by its own goodness which preserves all together. Wherefore the theologians name it “redemption”

B

<sup>13</sup> ἀμελίτῳ.

<sup>14</sup> See St. Thomas, *S.T.* I-II.87.7.2m.

<sup>15</sup> ἀλλοτριπραγίαν = the doing of what is another's. See Proclus, in *Remp.* p. 25.

insofar as it does not permit those beings which really are to be led astray toward non *being*. If any beings would be led toward discordance and disorder such that they would experience something less than the completeness of their own proper goods, it redeems them from this experience and from this weakness and privation. It provides what is lacking to them, in a fatherly way overlooks their infirmity, and raises them up from evil. It lets them stand in the beautiful, fills up the good that has slipped away from them, orders their disorder, restores their loss of world, completes their wholeness, and frees them from being mutilated.

C We must also say this about these individuals and about justice according to which the equality of all is measured and determined and every inequality, which is due to the lack of equality in these individuals themselves, is expelled. For if someone would regard inequality as the differences of the members of the whole, within the whole, and in relation to the whole, then justice is protective even of this. It does not allow the totality of those which have come to be mingled all together and to be thrown into confusion, but guards all beings according to the form of each, according to which each being is to be according to its nature.

## CHAPTER IX

CONCERNING [THE NAMES] GREAT, SMALL, SAME, OTHER, 909 A  
LIKE, UNLIKE, REST, MOTION, AND EQUALITY

### 1

Since great, small, the same, other, like, unlike, rest, and motion are attributed to the cause of all, let us now contemplate these pleasing divine names as far as we are able. B

The writings celebrate God as  
great in magnitude,  
manifesting the divine smallness  
in the gentle breeze,  
the same—when the writings say  
“You are the same,”<sup>1</sup>  
other—when the same writings depict God to be  
of many figures and many shapes,  
like—as support of likeness and of  
those which are alike,  
unlike to all, for no being is like to it,  
standing, moving, and unmoved,  
descended into eternity  
moved—for it goes forth into all, and  
as all other divine names which are  
similar to these in power and celebrated  
by the writings.

### 2

God is named great according to the greatness proper to itself. God gives itself to all those that are great, overflows and extends beyond every magnitude from without, encompasses every place, is projected beyond every number, crosses over every infinity; all this according to its beyond fullness, great works, and the gifts which spring out of it. Insofar as these are participated in by all in a stream of unlimited giving, they are wholly undiminished and have the same beyond full- C

<sup>1</sup> Ps. 101:28.

ness. They are not lessened by these participations but shoot forth even more greatly. This greatness is unlimited, without quality, without number; this is its preeminence in regard to the absolute and exceedingly extended flood of its incomprehensible majesty.

3

- 912 A God is said to be small as leaving every mass and distance behind and proceeding unhindered through all. Indeed the small is the cause of all the elements, for you will find none of these that has not participated in the form of smallness.<sup>2</sup> Thus, smallness is to be interpreted, with respect to God as its wandering and operating in all and through all without hinderance "penetrating down to the division of the soul, spirit, joint, and marrow," and discerning thoughts and "intentions of the heart," and indeed of all beings. "For there is no creation which is invisible to its face."<sup>3</sup> This smallness is without quantity, without quality, without restraint, unlimited, undefined, and all embracing although it is unembraced.
- B

4

God is called the same as  
 everlasting beyond every manner of being,  
 incontrovertible,  
 abiding in itself,  
 always the same and in the same way,  
 presencing similarly to all,  
 steadfastly and purely established  
 in itself and by itself  
 in the beautiful limits  
 of the identity beyond being,<sup>4</sup>  
 unchanged, inflexible,  
 unswerving, unalterable,  
 without mixture, without matter  
 most simple, without lack,  
 without increase, undiminished,  
 ungenerated—  
 nor as not yet generated, nor without completion  
 nor generated by this or that,  
 nor as be-ing any manner whatsoever,

<sup>2</sup> οὐδαμῇ γὰρ εὐρήσεις τὴν τοῦ μικροῦ ἰδέαν ἀμέθεκτον.

<sup>3</sup> Heb. 4:12-13.

<sup>4</sup> καὶ αὐτὸ καθ' ἑαυτὸ ἐφ' ἑαυτοῦ σταθερῶς καὶ ἀχράντως ἐν τοῖς καλλίστοις πέρασι τῆς ὑπερουσίας ταυτότητος ἰδρυμένον.



but as all-ungenerated<sup>5</sup> and  
 absolutely ungenerated,  
 always be-ing, self complete be-ing,  
 be-ing the same in itself,  
 uniformly and identically determining itself,  
 shining the same out of itself  
 upon all those enabled to participate in it.<sup>6</sup>  
 coordinating others to others,  
 abundance and cause of identity,  
 identically before-having in itself  
 those which are opposed  
 in the one single cause  
 beyond-having the whole identity.<sup>7</sup>

## 5

God is called other as  
 providentially present to all,<sup>8</sup>  
 coming to be all in all  
 by saving all,  
 abiding in itself and its proper identity,  
 standing without ceasing and wandering  
 according to one activity,<sup>9</sup>  
 giving the power of deification  
 to those which are turned towards it.

Now we must understand the otherness of the manifold shapes of God in the many formed visions to be something other than what these shapes manifest themselves to be to those to whom they are manifest. For if a discourse pictures the soul in a bodily way and fastens bodily parts to what is partless, then we must think differently about those parts which are placed about the soul in a way that is appropriate to the soul's partlessness. Thus we employ the names of the parts as symbols of its power and call the head, intellect; the neck, opinion—as between the rational and irrational; the breast, anger; belly, desire; and legs and feet, nature.

Clearly there is a much greater necessity when talking about that which is beyond all to clarify the otherness of the shapes and forms by

<sup>5</sup> παναγένητον.

<sup>6</sup> See Proclus, *El.Th.* 142.

<sup>7</sup> περιουσία καὶ αἰτία ταυτότητος ἐν ἑαυτῷ καὶ τὰ ἐναντία ταύτῳ πρόεχον, κατὰ τὴν μίαν καὶ ἐνικὴν τῆς ὅλης ταυτότητος ὑπερέχουσαν αἰτιάν.

<sup>8</sup> See Proclus, *de dec dub* I.101.

<sup>9</sup> See Proclus, in *Parm.* VI.56.

sacred, divinely suitable, and mystical explanations. Thus if one desires to apply the three dimensions of bodies to the invisible and dimensionless God, one must call the divine breadth the procession of God which spreads in all. We must call length, the power exceedingly extended to all; we must call depth its incomprehensible hiddenness and unknowing to all being. However, we will examine these matters in the *Symbolic Theology*. This is to avoid taking them away from the unfolding of many kinds of figures and shapes [which is accomplished in the *Symbolic Theology*] and to avoid mixing bodiless names together with sensible symbols. Now, however, we shall suppose that the divine otherness is not some becoming other of the identity beyond change, but the single multiplication of itself and the uniform processions of its great fecundity in all.

6

C If someone would speak of like and God as the same and would mean a whole which is wholly, uniformly, and indivisibly like to itself, then the divine name of likeness would not be despised by us. However, the theologians declare that the God beyond all as such is like unto none, but that it gives a divine likeness to those that are returned to it through the imitation of the definition and logos beyond all as far as is possible for them.<sup>10</sup>

D This is the power of the divine likeness: it returns all that have been brought forth back to the cause, Indeed, one must describe these as being like God according to a divine image and likeness. God is not like these; neither is a man like his individual likeness. For it is possible for those of like order to be like one another; because their likeness can be reciprocated in each and each be like to one another according to a likeness of form which has been produced. But we can not demonstrate a reciprocity with respect to cause and what is caused. For *being* in a like way is not given to these or those [beings] alone,<sup>11</sup> but God comes to be cause of the likeness for all those beings which participate in the *being* of likeness and, indeed, God is the support of likeness itself.<sup>12</sup> Further, the likeness in all beings is like a trace of the divine likeness which fills up the unity of all these.

916 A

<sup>10</sup> See Proclus, *El.Th.* 31, 35.

<sup>11</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Ver.* 2.11.1m, 4.4.2m; *De Malo* 16.7.8m; *S.C.G.* I.93.786; *S.T.* I.4.3.4m, 42.1.1m.

<sup>12</sup> Οὐ γὰρ μόνοις τοῖσδε ἢ τοῖσδε τὸ ὁμοίως εἶναι δωρεῖται, πᾶσι δὲ τοῖς ὁμοιότητος μετέχουσι τοῦ εἶναι ὁμοίοις ὁ θεὸς αἷτιος γίγνεται καὶ ἐστὶ καὶ αὐτῆς τῆς αὐτοομοιότητος ὑποστάτης.

What must be said about this? The theology itself worships God as unlike, uncoordinated with all, and as other than all. Indeed, what is even more paradoxical: they say that no *being* is like God. Nevertheless, this statement does not oppose God's likeness. For like and unlike are the same in God. The one pertains to the permitted imitation of the non-imitable which is received;<sup>13</sup> the other pertains to the inferiority of what is caused with respect to its cause and to the fact that it is left behind them by an unlimited and incalculable distance.<sup>14</sup>

What are we to say concerning the divine rest or seat?<sup>15</sup> What else but that God remains itself in itself, abidingly and irrevocably fixed in an unmoved sameness, that it is complacently founded beyond,<sup>16</sup> and acts in the same way and according to the same. It wholly and beyond every manner of being begins out of itself in its unalterableness and is wholly and beyond every manner of being unmoved in its unchangeableness.<sup>17</sup> That which is beyond every seat and rest is cause of the seating and rest of all; it has contained all in itself such that they are constantly protected by the stability of their proper goods.

But again [what are we to say] when the theologians say that the unmoved proceeds to all and is moved? Must not this be understood in a way appropriate to God? For we must reverently suppose that God is not moved according to locomotion, or alteration, by becoming other, by conversion, or by spatial motion—whether straight, circular, or that motion arising from both—or by intellectual, psychic, or natural motion. Rather God leads and conserves all in being, provides for all in every manner, and is present to all by the unbounded encompassing of all and by its providential processions and activities in all.<sup>18</sup>

However, we must concede to celebrate motion of the unmoved God in a way appropriate to God. Thus straight motion must be understood as the unswerving and unimpaired procession of its activities and as the genesis of the whole out of itself. Spiral motion must be

<sup>13</sup> τὸ μὲν κατὰ τὴν εὐδεχομένην τοῦ ἀμιμήτου μίμῃσιν.

<sup>14</sup> See St. Thomas, S.C.G. I.29.272; S.T. I.4.3.1m, II-II.19.11.2m, 163.2c.

<sup>15</sup> καθέδρας.

<sup>16</sup> καὶ ἀραροτῶς ὑπεριδρῦσθαι. (Complacently beyond [be-ing] founded.)

<sup>17</sup> καὶ κατὰ τὸ ἀμετάστατον αὐτὸν ἐξ ἑαυτοῦ πάντως ὑπάρχειν καὶ κατὰ τὸ ἀμετακίνητον αὐτὸ καὶ ὁλικῶς ἀκίνητον.

<sup>18</sup> See Proclus, *El.Th.* 142.

understood as the steadfast procession and the productive rest. Circular motion must be understood as the same, as containing the means and extremities which encompass and are encompassed, and as returning into itself all of those which have proceeded from it.

10

917 A      If someone would interpret the divine names of the same and justice (which are found in the writings) in the sense of equal, we must say that God is equal not only because he is without parts and unimpaired but that God goes equally into all and through all and is the support of equality itself. According to this, God makes equal both the like procession of all beings through one another, the participation of those which participate in equality—according to the capability of each—and the equal gifts which are distributed to all according to what is due them.<sup>19</sup> God is equal, for it has separately<sup>20</sup> and singly anticipated in itself every equality—intellectual, intelligible, rational, sensible, essential, natural, and generative—according to the power which is beyond all and productive of every equality.

<sup>19</sup> See Proclus, *El.Th.* 143. See St. Thomas, *S.T.* II-II.175.1.2a.

<sup>20</sup> ἐξηρημένως.

## CHAPTER X

### CONCERNING THE ALMIGHTY, ANCIENT OF DAYS; IN 936 C WHICH ETERNITY AND TIME [ARE CONSIDERED]

#### 1

It is now the time in our discourse to celebrate the many named God as almighty and "ancient of days."<sup>1</sup> For God is called almighty since it is the almighty foundation of all which contains and encompasses the whole and establishes, founds, constrains, and completes the all unbroken in itself. It brings forth the whole from out of itself as from an almighty root. It returns the all into itself as if into an almighty base. It contains these as an all powerful seat. It secures all that is contained in one grasp that is preeminent to all. It does not permit those which fall from it and, as it were, move from an all complete dwelling to be destroyed. The godhead is called almighty as governing all, as purely controlling those which are governed, as being desired and loved by all, and as placing a voluntary yoke and the sweet pangs of the good and of the almighty and indissoluble love of its goodness upon all. 937 A

#### 2

God is celebrated as "ancient of days" since it is eternity and time of all, yet before every day and before every eternity and time.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, God must be called time, day, due time, and eternity in a divinely appropriate way. Thus, God is unmoved and inaccessible in its every motion, abiding in itself in always be-ing moved, and is cause of eternity and time and of days. B

Whence it is represented in the sacred theophanies of the mystical visions as ancient and as new. The signification of the former is its primacy and be-ing from the beginning; the signification of the latter is that God does not grow old. Both names indicate that God goes forth from the beginning through all and down to the end. Or, as our sacred teacher says: each name shows the divine primacy; for the elder has a primacy in time and the newer has a primacy in number. For a unit and those about it are more primordial than the numbers which have advanced far from it. C

<sup>1</sup> Dan: 7:9.

<sup>2</sup> See St. Thomas, *S.T. I Suppl.* 90.1.4a.

I believe it is necessary to know the nature of time and eternity as they are explained in the writings. For the writings do not everywhere call what is eternal that which is absolutely ungenerated and really eternal. They give the name eternal to what is incorruptible, what is immortal and unchangeable, and what is always in the same way. They do this when they say "Be opened eternal doors"<sup>3</sup> and so forth. Moreover, they often characterize those beings which are most ancient by the name of eternity and, again, they sometimes call the whole duration of time "eternal"<sup>4</sup> insofar as antiquity, invariability, and being a universal measure are properties of eternity.

D Now they call time what is in genesis and is subject to destruction, change, and variability. Hence the theology says that we who are determined according to time participate in eternity when we have attained incorruptibility and are always in the same way. There is a time in the writings when eternity is glorified as being in time and time as being eternal.<sup>5</sup> But if we more greatly and properly know these, we shall call and designate those beings which are by eternity and those  
940 A beings which are subject to genesis by time. It is therefore necessary that we do not conceive those which are called eternal to be co-eternal with the God which is before eternity. But, following the most august writings, we should understand "eternal" and "temporal" according to the characteristics which agree with them. Further, we should interpret those beings which in some way [partake in] eternity and in some way [partake in] time to be intermediate between those which are and those which come to be.

God is celebrated as  
 eternity,  
 time,  
 cause of eternity and time,  
 age of days,  
 before time and beyond time,  
 changing appointed seasons and times,  
 beginning before time  
     insofar as it is before eternity  
     and beyond eternity.  
 God's "kingdom is a kingdom from all eternity."<sup>6</sup>  
 Amen.

<sup>3</sup> Ps. 24:7.

<sup>4</sup> See St. Thomas, *Quod*. V.4.1c.

<sup>5</sup> See Rom. 16.25, II Tim. 1:9, and Ps. 76:6.

<sup>6</sup> Ps. 145:13.

## CHAPTER XI

### CONCERNING PEACE AND WHAT IS MEANT BY BEING ITSELF, LIFE ITSELF, POWER ITSELF, AND OTHERS THAT ARE SAID IN A SIMILAR WAY 948 C

#### 1

Come and let us praise the divine and conciliating peace with hymns of peace. For it is what unifies all and is generative and complete of the likeness and concordance of all.<sup>1</sup> Whereby all desire it; it returns the divisible multitude of all into a whole unity; it unifies the tribal warfare of all into a like-formed community.<sup>2</sup> By a participation in the divine peace the eldest of the binding-together powers are themselves unified with respect to themselves and others and with the one source of the peace of the whole. These powers unify those which are subordinated to them with respect to themselves, one another, and the one, complete source and cause of the peace of all. This cause indivisibly crosses over to the whole, like bolts which bind together those which are divided. It defines, limits, and provides for all. It does not permit those which are divided to slip away into unlimitedness and indefiniteness such that they come to be disordered, unfounded, destitute of God, depart from their own unity, and become thoroughly mixed up with one another. 949 A

It is neither lawful nor desirable to speak or conceive something among beings about the divine peace and rest—whatever it is—which the divine Justus calls unspeakable and unmoved in every known procession; how it goes restfully and quietly; how it is in itself and within itself and is wholly beyond unity in respect of the whole itself; and how it does not abandon its unity in going into itself and multiplying itself but, in proceeding to all, abides wholly within (itself) through an excess of unity beyond-having all. But having taken this as unspeakable and unknowable in itself as be-ing beyond all let us investigate its intellectual and spoken participation as far as is possible to men and for us, who are inferior to many good men. B

<sup>1</sup> See St. Thomas, S.T. II-II.29.1.2a, 2.1a.

<sup>2</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Ver.* 22.1.12a; S.T. II-II.29.2c.

C First it is necessary to say both that it is the support of peace itself, the [peace of the] whole, and [the peace of] individuals<sup>3</sup> and that it mingles all with respect to one another according to their unconfused unity. According to this, they stand indivisibly united and equally continuous and pure according to their own proper form. They do not become turbid through mixing with opposites; the precision and purity of their unity is not dulled.

We will contemplate a one and simple nature of the peaceful unity. It both unifies all in itself, in themselves, and in one another and it preserves and brings together all in an unconfused and pure bond.

D Because of this peace, the divinely united intellects are united to their intellections and what they know; they are raised up to an unknowable contact with what is founded beyond intellect.

Because of this peace, the souls are united to the many formed logoi and they are brought together for one intellectual purification, advancing by a path and order which is proper to themselves through the immaterial and indivisible intellects to the unity beyond intellection.

952 A Because of this peace, the one and indissoluble interweaving<sup>4</sup> of all subsists in its divine harmony and is harmonized in a complete, natural and like concord. It is brought together without confusion and is indivisibly held together.

The wholeness of the all-complete peace extends into all beings. It is present by the greatest simplicity and purity of its unifying power, which unifies and binds together the all in one friendship: the highest through the middle and down to the lowest beings. This friendship binds them together in a like nature. It gives the enjoyment of itself and completes the last beings of all.<sup>5</sup> It produces all kinds in the unities, identities, unions, and bonds of the divine peace. It clearly stands and manifests all in unity, goes through all, and yet does not stand out of its proper sameness. For it proceeds to all, imparts itself in a manner appropriate to each, and abundantly supplies its fruitful peace. Beyond having unity, it abides whole towards the whole and beyond-being-united to the whole itself.<sup>6</sup>

Yet some will say, how is it that all desire peace, for many rejoice in otherness and difference and would not at any time will to rest?

<sup>3</sup> καὶ πρῶτον γε τοῦτο ῥητέον ὅτι τῆς αὐτοειρήνης καὶ τῆς ὅλης καὶ τῆς καθ' ἑκάστον ἐστὶν ὑποστάτις.

<sup>4</sup> συμπλοκή.

<sup>5</sup> See Proclus, *El.Th.* 48; in *Parm.* IV.13.56; in *Alcib.* II.189, III.323.

<sup>6</sup> καὶ μένει δι' ὑπεροχὴν ἐνωσέως ὅλη πρὸς ὅλην καὶ καθ' ὅλην ἑαυτὴν ὑπερηνωμένη.



Now if the one who says this regards otherness and differences as properties of all beings and says that there is no be-ing (whatever it is) in beings which sometimes will to be absolved of this property, we would not contradict his statement; moreover, we will demonstrate that this is a desire for peace. For all beings, by the love<sup>7</sup> of themselves both have peace, are united, and are unmoved and unfallen from themselves and what pertains to them. Further, the all complete peace is protective of the unmixed properties of each. By its providences which bestow peace to all it preserves all, both in respect to themselves and to others; it keeps them unperturbed and without confusion. It founds all in a stable and undeclining power with respect to their peace and immobility.

C

4

Now if all those things which are moved do not rest but are always moved to will their own motion, then even this is a desire for the divine peace of the whole, for the unerring preservation of all in themselves, for their protection from movement and change of the proper and moved life of those which are moved. In this those which are moved are at peace with themselves and must in the same way do what they do.

D

5

But if someone regards otherness as a falling away from peace, and says that this confirms that not all love is of peace, we must most strongly assert that there is no being which is completely fallen away from every unity. For the wholly unstable, unlimited, unfounded, and undeclined is neither be-ing nor in beings. But if someone says that these have come to hate peace and the goods of peace by glorifying in strife, anger, change, and instability, then we must assert that even these have retained a desire for peace in their dim images of a peaceful desire. For being troubled by experiencing many motions, and desiring to quiet these without knowing how to do so, they imagine that they can dwell at peace with themselves by satisfying the desires which are continuously given to them. Nevertheless they remain greatly troubled by not obtaining the pleasures which prevail over them.

953 A

But what are we to say of the love of man in the flood of peace in Christ according to which we have learned to war with ourselves no longer, nor with others, nor with angels, but have learned to work together with these for what is divine, according to our power and according to Christ's providence, which works in all and which pro-

<sup>7</sup> ἀγάπη.

B duces an ineffable peace which is predetermined from eternity and which reconciles us again to himself in the Spirit and through himself and in himself, to the Father? But we have sufficiently discussed these more than supernatural gifts in our *Outlines of Theology* and we are also afforded additional testimony in this matter by the sacred conceptions of the writings.

6

Since you have elsewhere questioned me by letter as to what I mean by being itself, life itself, and wisdom itself and, since, in addition to this, you have said that you doubt how I can sometimes say that God is life itself and at other times say that God is the support of life itself, I have thought it necessary, O sacred man of God, to solve the difficulties which you direct to me.<sup>8</sup>

C And first, that we may repeat what has been said ten-thousand times, there is no contradiction in saying that God is power itself or life itself and that God is the support of life itself, of peace, or of power. For God is called the one in terms of beings, and especially the first among beings, as the cause of beings; it is called the other as beyond be-ing beyond-beingly beyond all, even the first beings.<sup>9</sup>

D But you ask what in general do we call being itself or life itself, or all those which are simply and primordially and which we regard as having been the first to subsist from out of God. We say that this is not oblique but that it has a simple and direct explanation. For we do not say that being itself, the cause of the *being* for all beings, is some divine or angelic being—for only being itself beyond being is source, being and cause of the *being* for all beings<sup>10</sup>—nor do we say that life-generation is another divinity beyond the life beyond-god, which is the cause of everything whatever that lives and of life itself.<sup>11</sup> To speak summarily we do not say that beings<sup>12</sup> and subsistences are sources, and creators of beings. Now some who are negligent teach that these are gods and creators of beings, but to speak truly and properly neither these persons nor their fathers have known these [gods and creators]; for they do not exist.

956 A We maintain this: taken as source and taken divinely and causally, being itself, life itself, and the divinity itself are the one source and

<sup>8</sup> See St. Thomas, S.T. I.44.3.4m, 84.5.6.

<sup>9</sup> τὰ δε ὡς ὑπὲρ πάντα καὶ τὰ πρῶτως οὐσα ὑπέρων ὑπερουσίως.

<sup>10</sup> μόνον γὰρ τοῦ εἶναι πάντα τὰ ὄντα καὶ αὐτὸ τὸ εἶναι ὑπερούσιων ἀρχὴ καὶ οὐσία καὶ αἴτιον.

<sup>11</sup> οὐδε ζωογόγον ἄλλην θεότητα παρὰ τὴν ὑπέρθεον πάντων ὅσα ζῇ καὶ τῆς αὐτοζωῆς αἰτιάν ζωήν.

<sup>12</sup> οὐσίαι.

cause—beyond source and beyond being—of all.<sup>13</sup> Taken in a participating way, we call these the providential powers which are given forth out of the unparticipated God: the giving itself of being, the giving itself of life, and the giving itself of deification.<sup>14</sup> All beings participate in these in a manner appropriate to themselves and they are and are said to be be-ing, living, and deified. Similar remarks apply to the others. Whence the good is the support of the first of these, then of the whole of these, then of the parts of these, then of those which participate in the whole of them, and then of those which participate partially in them.<sup>15</sup>

But what is to be said concerning this? For some of our divine instructors call the beyond good and beyond god the support of goodness itself and divinity [itself]. They call these latter the good producing and god giving gifts which have proceeded from God. Thus they call beauty itself the beauty producing flow, the whole beauty, the partial beauty, the wholly beautiful, and the partially beautiful and all the other characters which are said or will be said in the same way. All of these show that the providence and goodness which are participated in by beings proceed and flow forth out of the unparticipated God in an ungrudging stream precisely so that the cause of all would be beyond all and the beyond being and beyond nature would be wholly beyond-having all being and nature whatever.<sup>16</sup>

B

<sup>13</sup> ἀλλ' αὐτοεῖναι καὶ αὐτοζωῆν καὶ αὐτοθεότητα φάμεν, ἀρχικῶς μὲν οὖν θεικῶς καὶ αἰτατικῶς, τὴν μίαν πάντων ὑπεράρχιον καὶ ὑπερούσιον ἀρχὴν καὶ αἰτίαν.

<sup>14</sup> τὴν αὐτοουσιώζω, αὐτοζώωσιν, αὐτοθεώσιν.

<sup>15</sup> διὸ καὶ τῶν πρώτων αὐτῶν ὁ ἀγαθὸς ὑποστάτης λέγεται εἶναι, εἴτα τῶν ὅλων αὐτῶν, εἴτα τῶν μερικῶν αὐτῶν, εἴτα τῶν ὅλως αὐτῶν μετεχόντων, εἴτα τῶν μερικῶς αὐτῶν μετεχόντων. See St. Thomas, *De Pot* 7.5c; 9.7.2a.c.

<sup>16</sup> ἵνα ἀκριβῶς ὁ πάντων αἴτιος ἐπέκεινα ἢ πάντων καὶ τὸ ὑπερούσιον καὶ ὑπερφνὲς παντὶ ὑπερέχη τῶν καθ' ὁποῖαν τινά ποτε οὐσίαν καὶ φύσιν. See St. Thomas, *Quod*. VIII.1.1c.



## CHAPTER XII

### CONCERNING HOLY OF HOLIES, KING OF KINGS, LORD OF LORDS, AND GOD OF GODS

969 A

#### 1

Since I believe that whatever has been said concerning these matters has received a fitting end, we must now celebrate the unlimitedly named<sup>1</sup> as Holy of holies, King of kings, as the one who rules eternity, in eternity, and beyond eternity,<sup>2</sup> as Lord of lords, and as God of gods. And first we must declare what we conceive holiness itself, kingdom, lordship, and divinity to be. We must also explain what the writings intend to show in their duplication of names.

B

#### 2

Thus holiness is, as far as we can say, both the freedom from abomination and the completely and wholly unstained purity. God is King as the distribution of every deification, world, divine law, and order. Lordship is not only the preeminence over the worse but also the complete and entire possession of every beauty and good. Lordship is also the true and unchangeable constancy. Wherefore "lordship" is (derived) from "lord," "lordly," and "to be a lord."<sup>3</sup> Divinity is the providence or forethought which contemplates all, bestowing and containing all by an all-complete goodness and filling itself full.<sup>4</sup> It is preeminent to all those which enjoy its providence.<sup>5</sup>

C

#### 3

We must celebrate all of these in an absolute way in respect of that which is thrown beyond all. We must add that it is beyond having holiness, likeness, lordship, and kingdom; it is the most simple divinity. Every pure distinctness of every clear purity, every order and disposition of beings is singly and collectively natured and distributed from

D

<sup>1</sup> τὸ ἀπειράνομον.

<sup>2</sup> τὸν αἰῶνα καὶ ἐπ' αἰῶνα καὶ ἔπι.

<sup>3</sup> διὸ καὶ κυριότης, παρὰ τὸ κύρος, καὶ τὸ κύριον καὶ τὸ κυριεύον.

<sup>4</sup> ἑαυτῆς ἀποπληροῦσα.

<sup>5</sup> See St. Thomas, S.T. I.13.8c, 103.4.sc.

out of it. This expels every discord, inequality, and non-symmetry, rejoices in the self-same good order and direction, and guides those which are worthy of participating in it. Both every perfect and complete possession of all that is beautiful and every good providence which contemplates and binds those for which it provides gives itself in an appropriate way toward the deification of those who are turned to it.

## 4

B

Since the cause of all is over full of all in one excess beyond having all,<sup>6</sup> the names of Holy of holies and the rest must be celebrated of the overflowing cause and separate preeminence,<sup>7</sup> as one might say. Thus insofar as those which are holy, divine, lords, or kings are pre-eminent to those which are not and the participations themselves are preeminent to participants, then that beyond all beings is founded beyond all beings and the unparticipated cause [is founded beyond] all those participations and that are participated. Also, the writings call the more primordial orders in each group holy, kings, lords, and gods; for it is through these that secondaries receive the gifts of God and multiply the simplicity of those gifts in conformity with their own differences. Through these gifts, the first beings providentially and in a divinely formed way being together their diversities in conformity with their unity.

<sup>6</sup> ἐπιδὴ δὲ ὑπερπλήρης πάντων ἐστὶν ὁ πάντων αἴτιος, κατὰ μίαν τὴν πάντων ὑπερέχουσαν ὑπερβολήν.

<sup>7</sup> καθ' ὑπερβλύζουσαν αἰτιάν καὶ ἐξηρημένην ὑπεροχήν.

## CHAPTER XIII

### CONCERNING THE COMPLETE AND THE ONE

977 A

#### 1

So much for these matters. If it pleases you we will proceed in the rest of our discourse to the most difficult [of the divine names]. For the theology attributes all and all at once to the cause of all; it is celebrated as complete and as one. It is complete not only as self-complete, as uniformly determined in itself and by itself, and as the most complete whole throughout the whole; it is complete as beyond completion in beyond-having the all, as determining every unlimited, as surpassing every limit, and as being captured or brought down by none.<sup>1</sup> It stretches forth to all at once and [is] beyond all by its undiminished giving and never ending activities. Again it is called complete as unincreased, as always complete, as undiminished, as anticipating all in itself, and as overflowing in a single, unceasing same overfull and undiminished ministration, in which all that are complete are made complete and filled with their proper completion.<sup>2</sup>

B

C

#### 2

It is called one since it is singly all in one preeminence of unity; for it is the non-wandering cause of the unity of all. There is nothing among beings that is without participation in the one.<sup>3</sup> But just as every number participates in a monad and, thus, we speak of one-half, one decade, one-third, and one-tenth, so all the aspects of all beings participate in the one. Whatever is a being is so by *being* one. Now the one cause of all is not one among many but is before every one and many and is determinative of every one and many. There is no multitude which is in some way without participation in the one: the many in parts are one in the whole, the many in accidents are one in a subject, the many in number or powers are one in species, the many in species are one in genus, and the many in procession are one in source. There is no being which does not in some way share in the one, which

D

980 A

<sup>1</sup> καὶ ὑπὸ μηδενὸς χωρούμενον ἢ καταλαμβανόμεν.

<sup>2</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Ver.* 8.8.2m.

<sup>3</sup> See St. Thomas, *S.T.* I.11.1sc.

has singularly anticipated all, the whole all, and those which are opposed in the singularity in all.<sup>4</sup> Without the one, there will be no multitude; without the multitude the one will be even as the unit is before every number which has been multiplied. And if you will suppose that all are unified to all, all will be one in the whole.

3

B It is especially necessary to know these matters: those that are called one have been unified in the one preconceived form of each, and the one is elemental for all. For if you annihilate the one, neither wholeness, parts, or anything else will be. For the one has uniformly anticipated and encompassed all in itself.<sup>5</sup> For this reason the theology in its conception of the one, celebrates the whole godhead as cause of all. And God, the Father, one Lord Jesus Christ, and one and the same Spirit are present beyond every way of being<sup>6</sup> through a simplicity which is thrust beyond the whole divine unity in which all are singularly contained and beyond what is unified.

C Thus all are justly referred and attributed to it. All are ordered together, abide, are contained, are completed and are returned by it, out of it, through it, in it, and into it. And you will not find some being that is what it is, is completed, and is preserved except in virtue of the one, according to which the entire divinity is named beyond every manner of being.

It is necessary for us to be returned from the many to the one by the power of the divine unity and to celebrate in a unified way:

The one and whole divinity:  
the one cause of all,  
that before  
every unity and multitude,  
part and whole,  
definition and indefiniteness,  
limit and non-limit,  
that which determines  
all beings and being itself,  
and is at once and singularly  
cause of all and every totality,  
before all,

<sup>4</sup> καὶ οὐδεν ἔστι τῶν ὄντων ὃ μὴ μετέχει πῃ τοῦ ἑνὸς τοῦ ἐν τῷ κατὰ πάντα ἐνικῶ πάντα καὶ ὅλα πάντα καὶ τὰ ἀντικείμενα καὶ ἐνιαίως προειλήφοτος. See St. Thomas, S.T. I.11.1.2m, I-II.17.4c.

<sup>5</sup> πάντα γὰρ ἐν εἰαυτῷ τὸ ἐν ἐνοιεῶς προείληφε τὲ καὶ περιέληφε.

<sup>6</sup> πρόσσεστιν ὑπερουσίως.



beyond all,  
beyond the one be-ing itself, and  
what determines the one be-ing itself;  
for the one be-ing  
is enumerable in beings,  
but number partakes in being.

The one beyond being  
determines the one be-ing  
and every number, and  
is source, cause, number, and order  
of unity, number, and all be-ing.  
Thus the divinity beyond all is celebrated  
as one and trinity;  
it is neither unity or trinity,  
or what is conceived by us  
or any other being.<sup>7</sup>

D

That we may truly celebrate  
its beyond unity and god-genesis,<sup>8</sup>  
we name that beyond names  
by trinity and a unitary divine name;  
we name the beyond being  
by beings.

981 A

But no unity, or trinity, or number,  
or oneness, or fecundity,  
or anything among beings,  
or anything known among beings,  
brings down the hiddenness,  
beyond all  
and beyond logos and intellect,  
of the beyond-divinity beyond be-ing  
beyond-beingly beyond all.<sup>9</sup>  
There is neither name nor logos of it;  
it is apart in inaccessibility.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>7</sup> διὸ καὶ μονὰς ὑμνουμένη καὶ τριάς ἢ ὑπὲρ πάντα θεότης οὐκ ἔστιν οὔτε μονὰς οὔτε τριάς ἢ πρὸς ἡμῶν ἢ ἄλλου τινὸς τῶν ὄντων διεγνωσμένη. Many translations and, indeed, the text in *Dionysiaca* print "Τριάς" when "trinity" is affirmed and "τριὰς" when "trinity" is denied. It is unclear to me how this is warranted.

<sup>8</sup> καὶ τὸ ὑπερηκωμένον αὐτῆς καὶ τὸ θεογόνου.

<sup>9</sup> ἐξάγει τὴν ὑπερ πάντα καὶ λόγον καὶ νοῦν κρυφίότητα τῆς ὑπερ πάντα ὑπερουσίως ὑπερούσης ὑπερθεότητος.

<sup>10</sup> See Proclus, *Pl.Th.* II.6, p. 96, 10, p. 109. Plato, *Symp.* 210ff.

We are not to bring forward the name of goodness itself as being agreeable to it. But in yearning for a thinking and a speaking about this ineffable nature, we must at first deny of it the most august of all names. Thus although we would seem to be in agreement with the theologians in this matter we are nevertheless far from the truth of things. Wherefore even the theologians honor the ascent through denials in which the soul stands outside of what is connatural to it, travels through every divine intellection—from which that beyond every name and every logos and knowledge is apart—and, at the ends of the whole, is joined together to it, insofar as it is possible for the soul to be joined together with it.<sup>11</sup>

4

C We have unfolded the intelligible divine names which we have brought together to the best of our ability. But we have fallen short not only of their precision—for truly even the angels might say this—or of the angelic celebration—for even the greatest of our theologians fall short of the lowest angels—or, clearly, of the theologians themselves and their auditors and disciples, but we have utterly and in an inferior way fallen short of the members of our own rank.

Thus if what we have said is right and we have really attained in our thinking to the unfolding of the divine names in a way which is possible for us, we must attribute this to the cause of all goods which has first given us the gift to speak and, then, to speak well. Further, if we have passed over some names of like power, it is necessary for you to understand these according to the same methods [as we have developed].

D But if what we have said is incorrect or imperfect so that we have fallen short of the truth either in whole or in part then correct our unwilling ignorance out of your love for man. Impart a logos to one who lacks instruction, aid one who does not have sufficient power, and heal one who is unwillingly ill. Do this by discovering some things from your self and others from others, while receiving everything from the good; then transfer them to me.

984 A Do not grow weak in doing good to the one who is a friend. For you have seen that we have kept to ourselves none of the sacred writings which have been given to us in our traditions. Rather, we have imparted and will continue to impart these genuine writings both to you and to other sacred persons so far as we are able sufficiently to speak and hear what is said; we do this so as not to commit an injustice against any part of our tradition. All these things are to be done if we

<sup>11</sup> See St. Thomas, *De Pot.* 9.7.1sc.

are not to be weak in our intellection or discourse about these matters. Let these matters be spoken in a way which is pleasing to God and let this be the end of the *Divine Names*. Being led by God, we will now proceed to the *Symbolic Theology*.



THE MYSTICAL THEOLOGY  
(to Timothy)



## CHAPTER I

### THE DIVINE DARK

998 A

1

O Trinity  
beyond being,  
beyond divinity,  
beyond goodness, and  
guide of Christians in divine wisdom,  
direct us to the mystical summits  
more than unknown<sup>1</sup> and beyond light,  
There the simple, absolved, and  
unchanged mysteries of theology  
lie hidden in the darkness beyond light  
of the hidden mystical silence,  
there, in the greatest darkness, B  
that beyond all that is most evident<sup>2</sup>  
exceedingly illuminates the sightless  
intellects.  
there, in the wholly imperceptible and invisible,  
that beyond all that is most evident  
fills to overflowing the sightless intellects  
with the glories beyond all beauty.  
This is my prayer.  
And you, dear Timothy,  
in the earnest exercise of  
mystical contemplation, abandon  
all sensation and all intellectual activities  
all that is sensed and intelligible,  
all non-beings and all beings;  
thus you will unknowingly be elevated,  
as far as possible,  
to the unity of that beyond being and knowledge.  
By the irrepressible and absolving ecstasis

<sup>1</sup> ὑπεράγνωστον.

<sup>2</sup> τὸ ὑπερφανεστάτον.

1000 A

of yourself and of all,  
absolved from all, and  
going away from all,  
you will be purely raised up  
to the rays of the divine darkness  
beyond being.

2

Disclose this not to the uninitiated:  
not to those, I say, who are  
entangled in beings,  
imagine nothing to be beyond-beingly  
beyond beings,<sup>3</sup> and  
claim to know by the knowledge in them  
“Him who has made the dark  
his hiding place.”<sup>4</sup>

B

If the divine mystical initiations are beyond these,  
what about those yet more profane, who  
characterize the cause which lies beyond all  
by the last among beings, and  
deny it to be preeminent to  
their ungodly phantasies and  
diverse formations of it.

For while to it,  
as cause of all  
one must posit and affirm  
all the positions of beings,  
as beyond be-ing beyond all  
one must more properly deny all of these.<sup>5</sup>

Think not that affirmations and denials  
are opposed  
but rather that, long before, is

<sup>3</sup> καὶ οὐδὲν ὑπὲρ τὰ ὄντα ὑπερουσίως εἶναι φανταζομένους.

<sup>4</sup> Ps. 18:11.

<sup>5</sup> δέον ἐπ' αὐτῇ καὶ πάσας τὰς τῶν αὐτῶν τιθέναι καὶ καταφάσκειν θένες, ὡς πάντων αἰτιᾷ, καὶ πάσας αὐτὰς κυριώτερον ἀποφάσκειν, ὡς ὑπὲρ πάντα ὑπερουσίᾳ. I prefer to render θέσις by “position” and τίθημι by “to position.” (This is followed in some Latin translations.) I do this because, for Pseudo-Dionysius, the divinity positions beings through subsisting them and letting them take up a position “away” from the divinity *as* beings.



that—which is itself beyond all position  
and denial—  
beyond privation.<sup>6</sup>

3

Thus the blessed Barthalomew says  
the theology is great and small,  
the gospel is broad and long, and yet narrow;  
he more than naturally conceives this:  
the good cause of all is at once  
greatly spoken, briefly spoken, and  
without logos;  
for it has neither logos nor intellection.  
Because it beyond-beingly lies beyond all,<sup>7</sup>  
it is truly and undisguisedly manifested  
only to those who  
step over all that is pure and impure,  
scale every ascent of the holy summits,  
relinquish every divine light  
celestial sounds and logoi, and  
enter into the divine darkness  
where really is—as the writings say—  
that beyond all.

It is not to be taken lightly  
that the divine Moses was ordered  
first to purify himself, and  
again to be separated  
from those who were not pure;  
after every purification  
he hears the many sounded trumpets,  
he sees the many pure lights which flash forth  
and the greatly flowing rays.  
Then he is separated from the many and,  
with those who are sacred and select,  
he overtakes the summits  
of the divine ascents.  
Yet with these he does not come to be  
with God himself;

<sup>6</sup> ἀλλὰ πολὺ πρότερον αὐτὴν ὑπὲρ τὰς στερήσεις εἶναι τὴν ὑπὲρ πᾶσαν καὶ ἀφαί-  
ρεσιν καὶ θέσιν.

<sup>7</sup> διὰ τὸ πάντων αὐτὴν ὑπερουσίως ὑπερκειμένην εἶναι.

he does not see God  
 —for God is unseen—  
 but the place where God is.  
 This signifies to me that  
 the most divine and highest  
 of what is seen and intelligible  
 are hypothetical logoi of what is subordinate  
 to that beyond-having all.<sup>8</sup>  
 through these is shown forth  
 the presence of that which walks  
 upon the intelligible summits  
 of its most holy places.

And then Moses  
 abandons those who see and what is seen  
 and enters into the really mystical  
 darkness of unknowing;  
 in this he shuts out every knowing apprehension  
 and comes to be in the wholly  
 imperceptible and invisible,  
 be-ing entirely of that beyond all—  
 of nothing, neither himself nor another,<sup>9</sup>  
 united most excellently  
 by the completely unknowing inactivity  
 of every knowledge, and  
 knowing beyond intellect  
 by knowing nothing.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> ὑποθετικοῦς τινας λογοῦς τῶν ὑποβεβλημένων τῷ πάντα ὑπερεχόντι.

<sup>9</sup> πᾶς ὢν τοῦ πάντων ἐπέκεινα, καὶ οὐδενος οὔτε ἑαυτοῦ οὔτε ἑτέρου.

<sup>10</sup> See St. Thomas, *S.T.* I.12.13, 13.6, III.92.2, II *Sent.* 9.12; *De Pot.* 7.5, 9.7; *De Virt.* 1.8

## CHAPTER II

HOW IT IS NECESSARY TO DEDICATE HYMNS AND BE 1025 A  
UNITED TO THE CAUSE OF ALL AND BEYOND ALL

Into the dark beyond all light B  
we pray to come,  
through not seeing and not knowing,  
to see and to know  
that beyond sight and knowledge,  
itself: neither seeing nor knowing.<sup>11</sup>  
For by the denial of all that is  
one sees, knows, and beyond-beingly hymns<sup>12</sup>  
the beyond being.  
We proceed similarly to those  
who produce a natural statue  
by removing every obstacle which hinders or hides  
the pure spectacle of what is hidden, and  
by manifesting in a single denial and by itself  
the beauty itself which had been hidden.  
I believe that one must celebrate  
the positions and denials in an opposite way;  
for we position these  
by beginning from what is first and  
descend through those in the middle  
down to the last;  
we deny them all  
having made our search for the  
highest principles<sup>13</sup>  
from the last to the very first.  
We do this to know undisguisedly C  
the unknowing which is covered round about  
by every knowledge in beings;

<sup>11</sup> τὸ ὑπὲρ θεῶν καὶ γινῶσιν αὐτὸ τὸ μὴ ἰδεῖν μηδὲ γινῶναι.

<sup>12</sup> ὑπερουσίως ὑμῆσαι.

<sup>13</sup> τὰς ἐπαναβάσεις.

we do this that we may see  
the darkness beyond being  
which is hidden by all the light in beings.

### CHAPTER III

#### THE AFFIRMATIVE AND NEGATIVE THEOLOGIES

1032 C

In our *Outlines of Theology* we have treated what is of greatest importance in affirmative theology. That is, how the divine and good nature is called both one and three, what fatherhood and sonhood are in it, and what the theology of the spirit is. We have celebrated how the lights which remain in the heart of goodness have flowed forth from the immaterial and invisible good and, in so shooting up, have without wandering remained abiding and co-eternal in the good, in themselves, and in one another.

D  
1033 A

Further we have celebrated how Jesus, beyond being; took on being among human beings. We have celebrated whatever else is manifested in the writings in our *Outlines of Theology*.

In the *Divine Names* we have celebrated how God is called good, be-ing, life, wisdom, power, and whatever else pertains to the intelligible divine names.

In our *Symbolic Theology* we have discussed the names which are transferred from sensibles to what is divine. Thus we have determined what are the divine forms, figures, parts, organs, places, worlds, curses, pains, sadnesses, indignations, drunks, hangovers,<sup>14</sup> oaths, periods of sleep, periods of wakefulness, and whatever other sacredly molded forms which symbolize the divine form.

B

You will have noticed how much more extensive are the last than the former. Necessarily the *Outlines of Theology* and the unfolding of the *Divine Names* are more briefly spoken than the *Symbolic Theology*; for the higher we ascend the more our language becomes restricted by the more synoptic view of what is intelligible. Now, however, that we are to enter the darkness beyond intellect, you will not find a brief discourse but a complete absence of discourse and intelligibility. In affirmative theology the logos descends from what is above down to the last, and increases according to the measure of the descent towards an analogical multitude. But here, as we ascend from the highest to what lies beyond, the logos is drawn inward according to the measure

C

<sup>14</sup> αἱ μέθαι καὶ αἱ κραιπάλαι.

of the ascent. After all ascent it will be wholly without sound and wholly united to the unspeakable.

But why, you will ask, do we begin the divine denial from the last of beings when we positioned the divine positions from the first beings? The reason is this: to position that beyond all position it is necessary to position the hypothetical affirmations from those which are more akin to it; in denying that beyond all denial, it is necessary to deny from those which are farthest away from it. For is it not life and goodness more than air and stones? And is it not drunkenness or not anger more than not spoken or not thought?

D

## CHAPTER IV

### IN PREEMINENCE, THE CAUSE OF ALL THAT IS SENSIBLE IS NOT ANYTHING SENSIBLE

1040 D

We say this of the cause of all be-ing beyond all:<sup>15</sup>

It is

not being-less,  
not lifeless,  
not without reason, not without intellect.  
Not body,  
not figure, not form,  
not what has quality, quantity, or mass,  
not in space,  
not visible,  
not what has sensible contact,  
not what has sensation or what is sensed,  
not what has disorder and confusion,  
not what is troubled by material passions,  
not powerless,  
not subjected to what happens to sensibles,  
not light in what lacks,  
not, and has not, alteration, destruction,  
privation, diminution, or anything else  
which pertains to what is sensed.

<sup>15</sup> ἡ πάντων αἰτία ὑπὲρ πάντα οὐσα.





## CHAPTER V

IN PREEMINENCE, THE CAUSE OF ALL THAT IS  
INTELLIGIBLE IS NOT ANYTHING INTELLIGIBLE

1045 D

Ascending higher we say:

It is

not soul, not intellect,  
not imagination, opinion, reason and not  
understanding,  
not logos, not intellection,  
not spoken, not thought,  
not number, not order,  
not greatness, not smallness  
not equality, not inequality,  
not likeness, not unlikeness,  
not having stood, not moved, not at rest,  
not powerful, not power,  
not light,  
not living, not life,  
not being,  
not eternity, not time.  
not intellectual contact with it,  
not knowledge, not truth,  
not king, not wisdom,  
not one, not unity,  
not divinity,  
not goodness,  
not spirit (as we know spirit),  
not sonhood, not fatherhood,<sup>16</sup>  
not something other [than that] which is known  
by us or some other beings,

1048 A

<sup>16</sup> οὐδὲ πνεῦμα ἐστὶν ὡς ἡμᾶς εἰδέναι οὔτε ὑιότης, οὔτε πατρότης. The phrase ὡς ἡμᾶς εἰδέναι need not be coordinated with οὔτε ὑιότης, οὔτε πατρότης especially if we understand πνεῦμα as "the divine stuff" or the divinity itself. This is a common Patristic usage of this term; it is a usage which has no necessary connection with the use of πνεῦμα in "Father, Son, and Spirit." See Prestige, *God in Patristic Thought*, (pp. 17-21)

not something among what is not,  
not something among what is,  
not known as it is by beings,<sup>17</sup>  
not a knower of beings as they are:  
There is neither logos, name, or knowledge  
of it.

It is not dark nor light,  
not error, and not truth.

There is universally  
neither position nor denial of it.

While there are produced positions and denials  
of those after it,  
we neither position nor deny it.

Since,

beyond all position is  
the all-complete and single cause of all;  
beyond all negation:  
the preeminence of that  
absolutely absolved from all  
and beyond the whole.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>17</sup> οὐδὲ τὰ οὗτα αὐτὴν γινώσκει ἢ αὐτὴ ἐστίν.

<sup>18</sup> ἀλλὰ τῶν μετ' αὐτὴν τὰς θέσεις καὶ ἀφαιρέσεις ποιῶντες αὐτὴν οὔτε τίθεμεν, οὔτε ἀφαιροῦμεν. ἐπεὶ καὶ ὑπὲρ πᾶσαν θέσιν ἐστίν ἡ παντελὴς καὶ ἐνιαία τῶν παντῶν αἰτία, καὶ ὑπὲρ πᾶσαν ἀφαίρεσιν, ἢ ὑπεροχὴ τοῦ πάντων ἀπλῶς ἀπολελφυσμένον καὶ ἐπέκεινα τῶν ὅλων. See Proclus, in *Parm.* VI.215. Here, ὑπεροχὴ ("preeminence") is more appropriately translated as "beyond-eminence."

**APPENDIX**  
**LETTERS I-V**



## LETTER I

1065 A

(To Gaius, a servant of God)

The dark is invisible in light and the more so as the light is greater. Knowledge renders unknowing invisible and the more so as the knowledge is greater. These things are to be received preeminently and not according to privation. Thus this is to be affirmed beyond every way of truth: the unknowing in God is hidden to those who have be-ing light<sup>1</sup> and knowledge of beings: the darkness of God which lies beyond<sup>2</sup> light is hidden to light and veiled to knowledge. If someone sees God and has understood what has been seen, he has not seen God but something of God among what is and what is known.<sup>3</sup> The more-than-founded beyond intellect and being is beyond every way of being and is known beyond intellect by its total not-knowing and not-being.<sup>4</sup> The greatest all-complete unknowing is a knowledge of that beyond all that is known.

## LETTER II

1068 A

(to the same Gaius)

How is that beyond all to be beyond the source of god<sup>5</sup> and beyond the source of good? If you understand divinity and goodness to be the thing itself<sup>6</sup> of the good-producing and god-producing gifts and to be the non-imitable imitation of the beyond-god and beyond good according to which we are made godly and good, and if this comes to be the source of being godly and being good for those who have been made godly and good, then the beyond source of every source<sup>7</sup> is beyond the so-called divinity and goodness as source of god and source

1069 A

<sup>1</sup> ὃν φῶς.

<sup>2</sup> τὸ ὑπερκειμένον αὐτοῦ σκότος.

<sup>3</sup> τὶ τῶν αὐτοῦ τῶν οὕτων καὶ γινωσκομένων.

<sup>4</sup> αὐτῷ τῷ καθόλου μὴ γινώσκεσθαι μήδε εἶναι.

<sup>5</sup> θεαρχή. I have usually translated this term as "godhead." I now translate it as "source of god"; this is clearly more appropriate to the context.

<sup>6</sup> αὐτὸ τὸ χρῆμα. This marks the second occurrence of this term in these texts. In *D.N.* II.3. χρῆμα was opposed to ὄνομα; its meaning in the present text is not clear.

<sup>7</sup> ὁ πάσης ἀρχῆς ὑπεράρχιος.

of good. According to this the non-imitable and incomprehensible is preeminent to imitation, comprehension, to what is imitated, and what is a participant.

### LETTER III

(to the same Gaius)

B

The sudden is what is brought forward, against hope; it is brought forward from what is to this time unmanifested into what is now manifested. I believe the theology has declared this in reference to the love of man in Christ: the beyond being had proceeded from hiddenness into a manifest taking on of being in a human way. It is hidden after the manifestation; or, to speak more divinely, it is hidden in the manifestation.<sup>8</sup> For this remains hidden about Jesus: the mystery in him is not brought forward by any logos or intellect. Rather it remains ineffable in being spoken, and unknown in being thought.

### LETTER IV

(to the same Gaius)

1072 A

B

You ask: how is Jesus, who is beyond all, essentially coordinated<sup>9</sup> to all humans? For Jesus is not in this case said to be man as cause of men, but truly as a whole man according to being. Yet we must not only determine Jesus in a human way. For the one who excellently loved man is not man alone—it is neither beyond being [alone] or man alone<sup>10</sup>—but is truly man and beyond man. The beyond being is given being according to men, from out of the being of men. Without a doubt, in the abundance of this [taking on of being] the overfull and always beyond being is nonetheless beyond beingness<sup>11</sup> in coming truly into being. It has taken on being beyond being and does what pertains to man in a way beyond man.

This is evident in that the virgin more than naturally conceived

<sup>8</sup> κρύφιος δὲ ἐστὶ καὶ μετὰ τὴν ἐκφασιν, ἥ ἵνα τὸ θεώτερον εἶπω, καὶ ἐν τῇ ἐκφάνσει.

<sup>9</sup> οὐσιωδῶς σθνητεταγμένος.

<sup>10</sup> οὐδὲ ὑπερούσιος ἢ ἄνθρωπος μόνον. If we read ἥ for ἡ this passage is translated "if it were man alone it would not be beyond being." This is the sense which all of the translators except Hilduin give it. Nevertheless ἡ and not ἥ is printed.

<sup>11</sup> ὑπερουσιότητος.

him, and in that the unstable water supported the weight of his material and earthly feet without giving way, but by drawing together without diffusion. Yet, what purpose is there in retelling the remaining [things about him] which are indeed many? Through these the one who divinely sees<sup>12</sup> is known beyond intellect such that the affirmations in respect of Christ's love of man have the power of preeminent denial. That we may speak summarily: he was not man, not as non-man but as from man and beyond man; beyond man, he truly came to be a man. As for the rest he did not do the things of God according to God; he did not do these things according to man. But as having been made man from God he showed us a new divine-human activity.'

## LETTER V

(To Dorotheus, a minister)

1073

The divine darkness is the inaccessible light in which God is said to dwell<sup>13</sup> invisibly to beings—through a preeminent light—and inaccessible to beings—through the throwing beyond of the flood of light which is beyond being. Into this darkness come all those who are worthy to see and know God. By not seeing and not knowing, they are truly come into that beyond vision and knowledge. They know this itself: it is beyond all the sensibles and intelligibles. Thus they say prophetically: "The knowledge of you is too wonderful for me; I am not empowered to attain it."<sup>14</sup> Similarly, the divine Paul is said to have known God in knowing that God is beyond all intellection and knowledge. Hence he says that God's paths are trackless, his judgments are inscrutable,<sup>15</sup> his gifts are indescribable,<sup>16</sup> and his peace exceeds all understanding.<sup>17</sup> Thus he has discovered that beyond all and has known that beyond intellection: it is beyond all, being-cause of all.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>12</sup> ὁ θεῶς ὁρῶν.

<sup>13</sup> See Tim. 6:16.

<sup>14</sup> Ps. 139:6.

<sup>15</sup> See Rom. 11:33.

<sup>16</sup> See II Cor. 9:15.

<sup>17</sup> See Phil. 4:7.

<sup>18</sup> ὅτι πάντων ἐστὶν ἐπέκεινα, πάντων αἰτίας ὢν.





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## THE MYSTICAL THEOLOGY

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## LETTERS

### Letter

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## INDEX VERBORUM

This index is designed to give both the occurrences of crucial and unusual Greek terms as well as an English-Greek-Latin glossary. The Latin terms are taken primarily from the translations of J. Eriugena and J. Sarracen. A subscript <sub>2</sub> indicates 2 occurrences of a word per paragraph, a subscript <sub>+</sub>, more than two. As translation has frequently required alteration of the Greek word and phrase order, the placement of Migne page numbers is sometimes only approximate. This index is based on A. Vanden Daele, *Indicies Pseudo-Dionysiani* and P. Chevalier, *Dionysiaca*. The serious student should consult either of these volumes for an extensive *index verborum* for the whole *Corpus Dionysianum*. The *index verborum* in *Dionysiaca* is the more extensive.

abandon (ἀπολείπω, relinquere): DN.680B 684B 720B 817B 821D 868C 949B 981AC; MT.997B

abide (μένω, manere): DN.649B 704D 708B 713A 720C 724C 820C 825B 912BD 916B 937B 949B 952A 980B; EP3.1096B

abiding (μονή, mansio): DN.641A 696A 704B 705B 873A 893A; MT.1033A

absence (ἀπουσία, absentia): DN.721A 728A

absolve (ἀπολύω, absolvere): DN.709C 716C 872C 897B 953C; MT.1000A 1001A 1048B

actuality (ἐνέργεια, operatio): DN.588A 592D 593B 645A<sub>2</sub>C 693B 705BC 708D 724C 725A<sub>2</sub>B 728AB 732A<sub>2</sub> 733A 736A<sub>2</sub> 868BD 912D 916C<sub>2</sub> 977B; MT.997B; EP4.1072C

affirmation (καταφάσις, affirmatio): MT.1000B 1033C

agape (ἀγάπη, diligibilis): DN.701C 709B<sub>2</sub>C<sub>2</sub> 712C<sub>2</sub>

all perfect, (ly) (παντελής, ὤς, perfectum, (e)): DN.597A<sub>2</sub> 636C 640CD 641C 680B 700A 717D 721AD 724D<sub>2</sub> 728D 729C<sub>2</sub> 736B 816B 817A 821A 824D 856D 892B 893A 909C 937A 949AD 952ACD 962B<sub>2</sub>C 972A; MT.1001A 1033B 1048B; EP1.1065A

always (ἀεί, semper): DN.597B 636C 680C 684C 701AD 704A 713AD 721AD 724C 725A<sub>2</sub>B 728A 732B 872B<sub>2</sub>D 873A 892C<sub>2</sub> 912C 937BD 952C 953A 977B; EP4.1072B

analogical (ἀναλογικός, analogicalus): DN.825A

analogous, (ly) (ἀνάλογος, -ὤς, analogicus, (e)): DN.588C 592BC 641C 681B 693B 716D 717D 720A 733C; MT.1033C

analogy (ἀναλογία, analogia): DN.588A 696C 701A 705C 872A 897A

angel (ἄγγελος, angelus): DN.593B 648A 696B 724B<sub>+</sub> 821CD 856A 869A<sub>2</sub>C 953A 981C<sub>2</sub>

appear (φαίνομαι, manifestare): DN.717A 865C<sub>2</sub> 912D 913A

be-ing (ὄν, existens): DN.588BC 596AB 637A<sub>+</sub> 640B 641A 644A 649B<sub>2</sub>C 684AD 700B 701B 705D 716BCD<sub>+</sub> 717ABC<sub>+</sub> 720A 720D<sub>+</sub> 721A 724A 728A 729A<sub>+</sub> 732D 733A<sub>+</sub>C 816B<sub>2</sub>C<sub>2</sub> 817AC<sub>2</sub>D<sub>+</sub> 820AB<sub>+</sub>D 821CD 824A<sub>2</sub> 825B 856B 869B 869C 872C 889CD<sub>2</sub> 893B<sub>+</sub> 896B 897B 909B 912C<sub>2</sub>

- 937BC 952B 953AC<sub>2</sub>D 980CD; MT.1033A 1048A; EP1.1065A; EP4.1072B
- beautiful (καλός, pulcher): DN.592A 596B 597C 637B 640AB 693A 701C<sub>+</sub>D<sub>+</sub> 704A<sub>+</sub>B<sub>+</sub>D 705A<sub>2</sub>CD<sub>+</sub> 708A<sub>+</sub> 709D<sub>+</sub> 712AB<sub>+</sub>C<sub>2</sub> 713CD 716AC 720C 725C 728D 817B 896C<sub>2</sub> 897B 912B 956B<sub>2</sub> 969B 972A
- beauty (κάλλος, pulchritudo): DN.701C<sub>+</sub>D 709B 728D 729A 893D 956B<sub>2</sub>; MT.1025B
- before being (προεῖναι, praeesse): DN.820B
- before be-ing (πρόων, praeexistens): DN.712C 820A<sub>+</sub> 821D 824A<sub>2</sub> 825B
- before have (v) (προέχω, prae habere): DN.648C 701B 704A 820B 824B 825AB 869B 892D 893C 912C 977B. This term has the traditional sense of "to anticipate."
- before subsist, (v) (προϋφίστημι, praesubsistere (existere)): DN.592D 704A 709D 820BD 824C<sub>2</sub> 857B 869B. This term is also translated as "pre-subsist" or "subsist beforehand."
- being (οὐσία, essentia (substantia)): DN.588AB<sub>+</sub> 589ABC<sub>2</sub> 593A<sub>2</sub>C<sub>2</sub> 645A<sub>2</sub>B 648AC<sub>+</sub>D 649AB 693B 696D 697ABC 705C<sub>2</sub> 717BCD 720BC<sub>2</sub> 724CD 725A 732A 733A 816BC<sub>+</sub> 817C<sub>2</sub> 820B 821CD 824ABC<sub>2</sub> 857B 869AB 892D 896D 916C 953CD<sub>2</sub> 956B 980C; MT.997B 1048A; EP1.1065A; EP4.1072AB<sub>+</sub>
- being (εἶναι, esse): DN.588B 589C 593D 649B 693B<sub>2</sub> 696A<sub>2</sub> 696C 704A 717A 721A 725C 732AC 733C 817D<sub>+</sub> 820A<sub>+</sub>B<sub>+</sub>C 821C<sub>+</sub>D<sub>+</sub> 824A<sub>+</sub>B 825A<sub>2</sub> 856BC<sub>+</sub> 869B 892BC 953C<sub>2</sub>; EP1.1065A
- being full (οὐιώδης, -ws, substantial (e)): DN.592D 593D 640C 645D 693B 696CD 700B 704B 892B 893A 917A; EP4.1072A
- being, source of (οὐσιαρχία, substantia + (suff. of facere)): DN.816B
- being, invest with (v) (οὐσιώω, substantia facere): DN.644C 648AD 721A; MT.1033A; EP3.1069B; EP4.1072B<sub>2</sub>
- beyond (ἐπέκεινα, super): DN.588B 593A 641A<sub>2</sub> 697C 713C 716C 865C 869D 913A 949B 956B; MT.1000C 1001A 1048B; EP2.1068A 1069A; EP4.1072AC; EP5.1076A. The term "beyond" also translates ὑπέρ, the listings for which are *passim*.
- beyond-being (ὑπερουσιός, superessential): DN.588ABC 592ACD 593B 596C 640BC 641ACD 644C 645AB 648CD 649A 701C 712B 716D 816B 817C 821C 824C 872C 892B 893C 912B 953D 956AB 980D 981A; MT.997A 1000A 1025AB 1033A; EP3.1069B; EP4.1072ABC; EP5.1073A
- beyond good (ὑπεράγαθος, superbonum); DN.640B 641A 680B 696C 956A; MT.997A; EP2.1069A
- beyond be-ing (ὑπερών, superexistens, superens): DN.824B 865B 953C 981A; MT.1000B
- beyond being (ὑπερεῖναι, superesse): DN.820B
- beyond beingly (ὑπερουσιώς, superessentialiter): DN.588C 589C 592B 593AC 648D 649B<sub>2</sub>C<sub>2</sub> 704B<sub>2</sub> 708A 716A 720B 824AB 912B 916B 953C 980BC 981A; MT.10000AC 1025B; EP1.1065A. This term is also translated as "beyond every manner of being."
- beyond beingness (ὑπερουσιότης, supersubstantialitas): DN.588A 593C 641A; EP4.1072B
- beyond divinity (ὑπερθότης, superdeitas): DN.981A

- beyond fullness (ὑπερπλήρης, superplenum): DN.648C 649AC 857B 865B 909C 972A 977B; EP4.1072B. The term is also translated as "overfull."
- beyond god (ὑπερθέος, superdeus): DN.593C 640B 641A 648D 649C 693B 953D 956A; MT.997A; EP2.1068A
- beyond have (v) (ὑπερέχω, superhabere): DN.596B<sub>2</sub> 648C 649A 684B 697A<sub>2</sub> 701AB 713B 816C 817AB<sub>2</sub> 820B 889CD 892A 893C 912C 937A 949B 956B 969C<sub>2</sub> 972A<sub>2</sub> 977B; MT.1000BD; EP2.1069A; EP5.1073A 1076A. This term has the traditional sense of "preeminent (v)."
- beyond source (ὑπεράρχικος, superprincipale): DN.589C 708A 956A; EP2.-1069A.
- beyond source (ὑπερύπαρξις, supersubstantia): DN.593C
- beyond unknowing (ὑπεράγνοστος, superignotus): DN.592D 593B 640D; MT.997A
- beyond what is unified (ὑπερενόμαι, superunire (superunitas)): DN.637A 641A 824B 949A 952B 980B 981A
- bind together (v) (συνέχω, continere): DN.649C 697BC 700BC 704A 705D 708BC 709D 824B 869AB 892A 893A 916CD 936D 937A<sub>2</sub> 952A 969C 980B. This term has the general sense of "conserving" or "bringing together."
- body (σῶμα, corpus): DN.588B 596B 641C<sub>2</sub> 681D 700A 704C 728CD<sub>+</sub> 733A 821B 856D 893A 913A; MT.1040D
- bring forth (v) (παράγω, adducere): DN.592A 649BC 700A 713A 716A<sub>2</sub>BC 724A 725A 729B 824C<sub>2</sub> 869AB 889D<sub>+</sub> 892A 893A 913C
- cause (αἰτία, causa): DN.589BC 592A 593D 506C<sub>2</sub>D 597A 637C 640C 644ABD 645B 648C 697BC 700A 701C<sub>2</sub> 704A<sub>2</sub> 713C 716A<sub>2</sub>B 721C<sub>2</sub> 724AB 729C<sub>2</sub> 732A<sub>+</sub>D 816C<sub>2</sub> 856BC 857AB<sub>2</sub> 868A<sub>2</sub>C 869AB<sub>+</sub>C<sub>2</sub> 872-ABCD 912C<sub>2</sub> 949A 956A 969C 972A 980D; MT.1000ABC 1040D 1048B
- cause (αἷτιος, causa): DN.596B 644C 708A 712AC 717A 816B 824B 825B 872A 889D 896D 909B 913D 916B 940A 953CD 956B 972AB 977BC 980BC 981C; MT.1025A 1040C 1045B; EP4.1072A; EP5.1076A
- cause (αἷτιον, causa): DN.588B 593C 596A 637B 645CD 701C 704AB 705AB 728D 732B 736B 816C 821B 824A 912A 913CD 916A 937B 953D
- celebrate (v) (ὑμνέω, laudare): DN.588C 589BD 593C<sub>2</sub>D 596ABC 597ABC 636C<sub>2</sub> 637A<sub>2</sub>B 644A 648AD 652A 681D<sub>2</sub> 697C 700C 701C 704B 709AB 713C 724A 736B 816BC<sub>2</sub> 820BC 824A 856A 857B<sub>2</sub> 865BC 868AC 872AC 889C<sub>2</sub> 893CD 896D<sub>2</sub> 897A 909B<sub>2</sub> 916C 936D 937A 940A 969AC 972A 980BCD 981A; MT.1025AB 1032D 1033A
- circle (κύκλος, circulus): DN.644A<sub>2</sub> 705AB 712D 821A 868B 916D
- circular, (ly) (κυκλικός, -ῶς, circularis, (iter)): DN.697B 704D 705A
- come to be, (v) (γίγνομαι, facere): DN.592AB 593B 644C<sub>2</sub> 645C 649C 696C 701D 704AC 705AD<sub>2</sub> 708D 709B 712A<sub>+</sub>B 716A<sub>2</sub>B 717BC 720C<sub>2</sub> 724C<sub>2</sub> 725A 728BD 729BC 732AC<sub>+</sub> 733BC 817C<sub>+</sub>D<sub>+</sub> 824A 856C 868A 869A 897C 912C<sub>2</sub>D 913D 940A 949A; MT.1001A 1025A; EP1.1065A; EP2.1069A; EP4.1072C; EP5.1073A
- conceive, (v) (ἐννοέω, cogitare): DN.588AC 592D 593B 645B 649D 713A 865B 893C 949B 981A; MT.1000C

condition (ἕξις, habitus): DN.593C 696D 705D 720B<sub>2</sub> 725A 728ABD 733C 736A 821B

connection (συνοχή, continentia): DN.596D 696A 700A 704C 705D 712A 937A 949C

constitute, (v) (ὑπαρχώ, subsitere): DN.733B 817D<sub>2</sub> 821C 916B 940A

constitution (ὑπαρξις, essentia): DN.593D 636C 640C 641AD 693B<sub>2</sub> 704B 724A 817C. This term is also translated as "source" and "ground."

contemplation (θεωρία, contemplatio): DN.588CD 592C 597B 681A 684C 705B

contemplate, (v) (θεωρέω, contemplari): DN.592D 684C 821B 857B 909B 949C; MT.1000D

dark (σκοπός, tenebra): DN.585A 649A 708C 713B 716C 732C 816B 868C 893B 897A

demonstrate (ἀποδεικνυμι, demonstrare): DN.593B 636C 637C 640B 712B 736B

denial (ἀπόφασις, negatio): DN.981B; MT.1000B; EP4.1072B

denial (ἀφαίρεσις, ablatio): DN.593C 640B 641A<sub>2</sub> 697A 704B 872A; MT.-1000B 1025AB<sub>2</sub> 1033C<sub>2</sub> 1048B<sub>+</sub>

deny, (v) (ἀποφαίνω, negare): DN.588B 952B

desire, (v) (ἐφίημι, desiderare): DN.593D 684C 693B 696A 697A 700AB<sub>2</sub>C 701A 704B 708A 712B 713D 716ABC 720C<sub>+</sub> 725C<sub>+</sub> 733CD<sub>+</sub> 817B 868C 892C<sub>+</sub> 896C 948D 952B 953A

difference (διάκρισις, discriptio): DN.636B 640D<sub>2</sub> 641A<sub>2</sub>B<sub>2</sub>D<sub>+</sub> 644AD 649-AB<sub>2</sub>C 652A<sub>+</sub> 696A 704B 705C 821B 952B<sub>2</sub>

differentiate, (v) (διακρίνω, discernere): DN.636B 640AC<sub>2</sub> 641B<sub>2</sub> 644C<sub>2</sub>D 649B 681B 684D 821A<sub>2</sub> 824B 892CD

dissimilar, (ly) (ἀνόμοιος, -ῶς, dissimilis, (iter)): DN.644B 732BD 909AB 916A<sub>2</sub>

divine, (ly) (θεῖος, -ῶς, divinus, (e)): DN.585AB 588A<sub>2</sub> 589D 592C<sub>+</sub> 593B 597ABC 636B 637C 640A<sub>2</sub>D<sub>2</sub> 641AD 644A<sub>2</sub>CD 645A<sub>2</sub>C<sub>2</sub> 648B<sub>2</sub> 649B<sub>2</sub>D<sub>2</sub> 652A 680BCD 681A<sub>2</sub>B<sub>2</sub>C 684A<sub>2</sub>B<sub>+</sub>C<sub>+</sub> 696AB 697C 700AD 705B 708BC 709AB<sub>+</sub>C<sub>+</sub> 712A<sub>2</sub>BD 713AC 720A 724AB<sub>2</sub> 725A 733B 736B 817B 820A 824C 856BD<sub>2</sub> 857A<sub>+</sub> 865B<sub>2</sub>C<sub>+</sub>D 868ABCD 869ABD 872AC 873A 889BC 893AB 896ABCD 909B 913ABC 916AB 937AB<sub>2</sub> 948D 949A<sub>2</sub>CD 952AC 953C 956A 972B 981B; MT.997A 1000A<sub>2</sub>BC<sub>2</sub>D<sub>2</sub> 1033A<sub>+</sub>B<sub>+</sub>C<sub>2</sub>; EP3.1069B EP4.1072BC; EP5.1073A<sub>2</sub>

divinity (θεότης, divinitas): DN.588AC 593B 597C 636C<sub>+</sub> 637A<sub>2</sub>B<sub>+</sub>C 640B 641AD 644A<sub>2</sub> 645B<sub>2</sub> 648C 693B 697C 700A 816C<sub>+</sub> 953D 956A<sub>2</sub> 969BC<sub>2</sub> 980C<sub>2</sub>D; MT.1048A; EP2.1068A 1069A

echo (ἀπήχημα, resonantia): DN.697C 720AC 856B 868C 892A

end (τέλος, finis): DN.697C 700A 716C 732BD 824B 825B 872BC 973B 969B

eros (ἐρῶς, amor): DN.589A 693A 704A 708B<sub>+</sub> 709AB<sub>+</sub>C<sub>+</sub> 712A<sub>+</sub>B<sub>2</sub>C<sub>2</sub>D 713A<sub>2</sub>B<sub>+</sub>C<sub>+</sub> 869B 937A

equality (ἰσότης, aequalitas): DN.705C 897B<sub>2</sub> 909A 917A<sub>2</sub>; MT.1048A



eternal, (ly) (αἰώνιος, -ῶς, aeternum, (e)): DN.596B<sub>2</sub> 821D 825B 856AB 865B 896A 937C<sub>2</sub>D 940A<sub>2</sub>

eternal, (ly) (αἰδῖος, -ῶς, aeternus, (e)): DN.592A 700C 712D 729C 896A 912B 937C

eternity (αἰών, saeculum): DN.596AB 648C<sub>+</sub> 697C 817C<sub>+</sub>D<sub>+</sub> 820A<sub>+</sub>B 824A<sub>2</sub> 825B<sub>2</sub> 856B 892D 893C 909B 936C 937B<sub>+</sub>C<sub>+</sub>D<sub>+</sub> 940A<sub>+</sub> 953B 969A<sub>2</sub>; MT.1048A

evil (κακός, malum): DN.693A 716A<sub>+</sub>B<sub>+</sub>C<sub>+</sub>D<sub>+</sub> 717A<sub>+</sub>B<sub>+</sub>C<sub>+</sub>D 720C<sub>2</sub> 721A<sub>+</sub>BC<sub>+</sub> 724A<sub>+</sub>B<sub>+</sub>C<sub>+</sub>D 725A<sub>+</sub>B<sub>+</sub>C<sub>+</sub>D<sub>2</sub> 728A<sub>+</sub>B<sub>+</sub>C<sub>+</sub>D<sub>+</sub> 729A<sub>+</sub>B<sub>+</sub>C<sub>+</sub> 732A<sub>+</sub>B<sub>+</sub>C<sub>+</sub>D<sub>2</sub> 733A<sub>+</sub>B<sub>2</sub>C<sub>+</sub> 736AB<sub>2</sub> 897B

extend upward, (v) (ἀνατείνω, extendere): DN.588D 589AB 592C 680C 696C 701A 713C; MT.997B

father (πατήρ, pater): DN.637A<sub>2</sub>B<sub>+</sub>C 640C 641D<sub>+</sub> 644C 645BC<sub>2</sub> 649D 713C 953BD 980B

flow (χύσις, effusio): DN.649C 892D 893D 909C<sub>2</sub> 956B<sub>2</sub>

form (εἶδος, forma): DN.648C<sub>+</sub> 705C 728CD 729A 897C 913D 949C 980A<sub>2</sub>B; MT.1040D

formless (ἀνείδεος, sine forme): DN.648C<sub>2</sub> 697A<sub>2</sub> 716A 729A. This term is also translated as "without form."

found, (v) (ἰδρύνω, collacare): DN.588C 593A 641D 680B 729B 821C 892D 912B 949C

found-beyond, (v) (ὑπεριδρύνω, supercollacare): DN.593A 596A 641C 645C<sub>2</sub> 648C 716D 816C 865B 868D 916B 972B; EP1.1065A

foundation (ἰδρυσις, collactio): DN.589C 592B 593C 641A 645A 696A 697B 704B 705B 821B 872C. This term is also translated as "ground."

genesis (γένεσις, generatio): DN.693C 700A 717B<sub>+</sub>C<sub>+</sub> 720C 728B 729B 817C<sub>2</sub> 869A 916C 937D 940A

God (θεός, Deus): DN.585B 592C 596AB<sub>2</sub> 597C 636C 637C 644C<sub>2</sub> 645AC 649BC<sub>+</sub>D<sub>+</sub> 680B 700C<sub>2</sub> 704B 712A 720B 721D 724A<sub>+</sub>B 725A 729C 736B 816D 817A<sub>+</sub>BD 820B 824C 865B<sub>2</sub>C 868A<sub>+</sub>C 869ABC<sub>+</sub> 872A<sub>+</sub>C 889C 892B 893BCD 909BC 912AD<sub>2</sub> 913ABC<sub>+</sub>D 916ABC<sub>2</sub> 917A 936D 937B 940A<sub>2</sub> 949A 953B<sub>2</sub>C<sub>2</sub>D 956A<sub>2</sub>B 969A<sub>2</sub>B<sub>2</sub> 972B<sub>2</sub> 980B 984A<sub>2</sub>; MT.1000D; EP1.1065A<sub>2</sub>; EP4.1072C<sub>2</sub>; EP5.1073A<sub>+</sub>

God generation (θεογένος, deigenus): DN.637B 645B 981A

godhead (θεαρχία, thearchia): DN.589ACD<sub>2</sub> 593D 596A 636C 637BC 640D 649B 889C 937A 980B; EP2.1068A 1069A

good (ἀγαθός, bonum): DN.588BC 589C 596B 636C<sub>2</sub> 637A<sub>2</sub> 640BC 649B 680BC 693AB<sub>+</sub> 696A<sub>2</sub>BC<sub>+</sub>D<sub>+</sub> 697A<sub>+</sub>B<sub>2</sub>C<sub>2</sub> 700ACD 701AC 704A<sub>2</sub>B<sub>+</sub>D 705A<sub>2</sub>CD<sub>+</sub> 708A<sub>+</sub>B<sub>+</sub> 709D<sub>+</sub> 712AB<sub>+</sub>C<sub>+</sub>D<sub>+</sub> 713D<sub>+</sub> 716A<sub>+</sub>B<sub>+</sub>C<sub>+</sub>D<sub>+</sub> 717A<sub>+</sub>C<sub>+</sub>D<sub>+</sub> 720A<sub>+</sub>B<sub>+</sub>C<sub>+</sub>D<sub>+</sub> 721A<sub>+</sub>C<sub>+</sub> 724A<sub>+</sub>C<sub>2</sub> 725A<sub>+</sub>B<sub>+</sub>C<sub>+</sub> 728A<sub>+</sub> 729A<sub>+</sub>B<sub>+</sub>C<sub>+</sub> 732A<sub>+</sub>B<sub>+</sub>C<sub>+</sub>D<sub>2</sub> 733A<sub>2</sub>B<sub>+</sub>C<sub>+</sub>D<sub>2</sub> 736A<sub>+</sub>B<sub>2</sub> 816BC<sub>2</sub>D 817B<sub>2</sub>C 824C 865B 892C<sub>2</sub> 897AB<sub>2</sub> 916B 949B 953A 956A 969B 972A 981CD; MT.1000C 1033A<sub>+</sub>

goodness (ἀγαθότης, bonitas): DN.588A 589C 592A 593BD 596D 597A<sub>2</sub> 641A 644A<sub>2</sub> 681D 693B<sub>+</sub> 696AB<sub>2</sub>C 697C<sub>+</sub> 700A 708A 712AB 717D 724B<sub>2</sub> 733C 736B 816C<sub>+</sub> 825A 856C 897A 937A 956B 969C 981A; MT.1033AC 1048A; EP2.1068A 1069A

harmony (ἁρμονία, harmonia): DN.592A 704C 705C 724D 821B 872B 892D 949D  
 hear, (v) (ἀκούω, audire): DN.637A 684AB 709A 736A 984A; MT.1000C  
 hidden (κρύβιος, occultus): DN.588AC<sub>2</sub> 589BC 592B 640D 696B; MT. 1025B; EP3.1069B<sub>2</sub>  
 hiddenness (κρυφιώτης, occultitas): DN.645A 913B 981A  
 hierarchy (ιεραρχία, hierarchia): DN.696B  
 holy (ἅγιος, sanctus): DN.589A 593B 596B<sub>2</sub> 597B<sub>2</sub> 648B 696C 713A 969A<sub>+</sub> 972A<sub>2</sub>B<sub>3</sub>; MT.1000C 1001A  
 human (ἄνθρωπος, humanum): DN.597C 865B 892C 913C 953C; EP4.- 1072A<sub>+</sub>B<sub>+</sub>C<sub>+</sub>  
 hymn (ὕμνος, hymnus): DN.589B 641D 713A<sub>2</sub>BC 948D; MT.1025A  
  
 identity (ταυτότης, identitas): DN.641A 696B 704B 705A<sub>2</sub> 716A 733C 872CD 896A 912BC<sub>2</sub>D 913B 916B 952A<sub>2</sub> 969D. This term is also translated as "sameness."  
 ignorant, (v) (ἀγνοέω, ignorare): DN.648A 869C 872D 889C 981D  
 illuminate, (v) (φωτίζω, illuminare): DN.589BC 645B 693B 697C<sub>2</sub>D 700B<sub>2</sub> 701B 728A  
 image (εἰκών, imago): DN.645C 693B 697C<sub>+</sub> 700B 724B 821B 869D 913C<sub>2</sub>  
 immeasurable, (ly) (ἄσχετος, ως, immeasurabilitas, (iter)): DN.596D 644A 713C 820D 824B 916C; MT.997B; EP2.1069A  
 imparticipability (ἀμεθεχία, imparticipabilitas): DN.644B  
 imperfect, (ly) (ἀτελής, ως, imperfectus, (e)): DN.648C<sub>2</sub> 717BC 721A<sub>2</sub> 728B 732D 896A 981D  
 incomprehensible (ἀπεριόριστος, incomprehensibile): DN.588C 593A 909C 912A 913B  
 ineffable, (ly) (ἄρρητος, -ως, nondicibilis, (e)): DN.588B<sub>2</sub> 589B 592A 593B 644C 648AC 684A 816B 865BC 953A 981A; EP3.1069B  
 infinite (ἄπειρος, infinitus): DN.705C 732B<sub>2</sub>D 889D<sub>2</sub> 892D 909C 912A 916A 949A 953A  
 intellect (νοῦς, intellectus): DN.588A<sub>2</sub>B<sub>+</sub>D 589AB 592C<sub>+</sub> 593A<sub>2</sub>B<sub>2</sub>C 596B<sub>2</sub> 641C 645A<sub>2</sub>C 648ACD 680B 684B<sub>2</sub>C 693C 696C 700D 701A 704CD 705C 708D 709A 720B 728D 733A 816C 817AB 865ABC<sub>2</sub> 868AB<sub>2</sub>C<sub>+</sub> 869A<sub>2</sub>C<sub>2</sub> 872ABC 913A 949C<sub>2</sub> 981A; MT.997B 1001A 1033B 1045D; EP1.1065A<sub>2</sub>; EP3.1069B; EP4.1072B; EP5.1076A  
 intellection (νόησις, intellectus): DN.592D 593C 705D 709A 821B 865B 868B<sub>2</sub>C 872A 949CD<sub>2</sub> 981B 984A; MT.1000C 1045D<sub>2</sub>; EP5.1073B 1076A  
 intellectual, (ly) (νοερός, -ως, intellectualis, (iter)): DN.588A 592D 593BD 645A<sub>2</sub>B 681B 693B 696C 700BD 701AB 705AB 708CD<sub>2</sub> 713AB 816B 817B 821C 857B 868B<sub>+</sub>D 892BC<sub>2</sub> 917A 949D; MT.997B  
 intelligible, (ly) (νοητός, -ως, intelligibilis, (iter)): DN.588B 592BC<sub>2</sub> 597B 645C<sub>2</sub> 681C 684B 693B 700CD<sub>2</sub> 701AB 708D 713B 821C 865C 868B<sub>2</sub>C 869C 916C 917A 949B 981C 984A; MT.997B 1001A 1033AB 1045D<sub>2</sub> 1048A; EP5.1073A

invisible (ἀναφής, intangibilis): DN.588B 896A 913A; MT.997B 1001A.

This term is also translated as "without light."

invisible (ἀφανής, occultus): DN.724B 857A 912B; EP1.1065A; EP3.1069B

know, (v) (γινώσκω, cogitare): DN.645A 684A<sub>2</sub> 817B 868D 869B.C<sub>+</sub> 872A<sub>+</sub>BC<sub>2</sub> 949A; MT.1001A 1025A<sub>+</sub>B<sub>2</sub> 1048A<sub>2</sub>; EP1.1065A<sub>+</sub>B; EP4.-1072B; EP5.1073A<sub>+</sub> 1076A

knowledge (γνώσις, cognitio): DN.592D<sub>2</sub> 593A<sub>+</sub>B 596AB 645A 684C 701B 705B 709C 713B 733D<sub>2</sub> 736A<sub>2</sub> 825A 868A<sub>2</sub>BCD 869AB<sub>2</sub>C<sub>2</sub> 872A<sub>2</sub> 981B; MT.997B 1000A 1001A 1025A 1048A; EP1.1065A<sub>+</sub>; EP5.1073A<sub>2</sub>B

knowledge (ἐπιστήμη, scientia): DN.588AC 593B 640A 681C 684B 705D 869C 872A; MT.1048A

lack (ἐλλειψις, defectus): DN.717C 720C 724D 728A<sub>+</sub>BC 729C 732BD 733B 736A 869A

lie (establish)-beyond, (v) (ὑπέρκειμαι, superponere): DN.588B 644A 701A 713B 969C; MT.1000AC 1033C; EP1.1065A. This term has the sense of beyond what is established.

life (ζωή, vita): DN.589BC<sub>2</sub> 593C<sub>2</sub> 596ABD 637A 645AB 648C 693C 696C<sub>+</sub>D<sub>2</sub> 697A 700A 705C 712A 720BC<sub>+</sub> 724A 816BC<sub>+</sub> 817A<sub>2</sub>B 821B 856A<sub>+</sub>B<sub>+</sub>C<sub>+</sub>D<sub>2</sub> 857A<sub>+</sub>B<sub>+</sub> 865B 892D 952C 953D; MT.1033AC 1048A

light (φῶς, lux): DN.589B 592B 593C 596A 637B 640A 641AB<sub>+</sub>C<sub>2</sub> 645AB 649D 693AB 696B 697BCD<sub>2</sub> 700A<sub>2</sub>BCD<sub>+</sub> 701A<sub>+</sub>B<sub>2</sub>C 708D 724B 728A 824B 865B 869A<sub>2</sub>B<sub>2</sub> 892A; MT.1000CD 1025A 1033A 1040D 1048A<sub>2</sub>; EP1.1065A<sub>+</sub>; EP5.1073A

like (ὅμοιος, similis): DN.724A 820B<sub>2</sub> 909AB<sub>+</sub> 913C<sub>+</sub>D<sub>+</sub> 916A<sub>2</sub> 917A 937C

limit (πέρας, finis): DN.592D 593AC 596C 700B 704A 705C<sub>2</sub>D 708A 736B 821B 825B<sub>2</sub> 868C 912B 977B 980C 984A

logos (λόγος, verbum, ratio): DN.585AB 588AB<sub>+</sub> 593AB<sub>2</sub>C<sub>2</sub> 596B 597C 649A 681AC 693B<sub>2</sub>C 700BC 704ABC 705C 708A<sub>2</sub>D<sub>+</sub> 709AB 713AB 716B 717AB 724BD 725A 728C 732AB 733AB 736AB<sub>2</sub> 816BC<sub>2</sub> 817B<sub>+</sub> 821ABD 824CD 857A<sub>2</sub> 865ABC<sub>2</sub> 868AB<sub>2</sub>C<sub>2</sub> 869AD 872AC<sub>+</sub>D 873A 892C 897A 913A<sub>2</sub>C 916AC 936D 949D 977B 981A<sub>2</sub>BD 984A; MT.-1000C<sub>2</sub>D 1033BC 1045D<sub>2</sub> 1048A; EP3.1069B. This term is also translated as "reason," "discourse," or "nature" where appropriate.

manifest, (v) (εκφαίνω, manifestare): DN.588AC 636C 645A 684D 696B 697C 816B<sub>2</sub>C; MT.1000C 1033A

manifestation (ἐκφανσις, manifestatio): DN.592A 640D 681AC 712C; EP3.1069B<sub>2</sub>

matter (ὑλη, materia): DN.648A 693C 729A<sub>+</sub>B<sub>+</sub>

monad (μονάς, monas): DN.589D<sub>2</sub> 721C 820D<sub>+</sub> 937C<sub>2</sub> 977C 980AD<sub>2</sub> 981A

move, (v) (κινέω, movere): DN.700AB<sub>2</sub> 704ACD 705ABD 708BD 709D 712C<sub>2</sub> 713B 720C 825B<sub>2</sub> 896A 909B 916C<sub>2</sub> 937AB 952C<sub>+</sub>D; MT.1048A

motion (κίνησις, motus): DN.593D 697B<sub>2</sub> 700B 704C<sub>+</sub> 705ABC<sub>2</sub> 712C 720C 725B 729B 821B 856B 909AB 916C<sub>2</sub> 937B 952C

multitude (πλῆθος, multitudo): DN.649C<sub>+</sub> 705C<sub>2</sub> 709BC 868B 948D 977CD 980A<sub>+</sub>C; MT.1033C  
 mystical, (ly) (μυστικός, -ως, mysticus, (e)): DN.596A 597B 645A 648AB 684A 913A 937B; MT.997A<sub>2</sub>B 1001A  
 name (ὄνομα, nomen): DN.585AB 593ABC 596A<sub>+</sub>C 640C 649B 709B<sub>+</sub>C<sub>2</sub> 824D 872A 913A 969B 981A<sub>2</sub>B; MT.1033AB 1048A  
 nameless (ἀνώνυμος, innominabil): DN.596A<sub>+</sub>C 865B  
 nature (φύσις, natura): DN.592A<sub>+</sub> 648AD 684C 704A 705C 716C<sub>2</sub> 724C<sub>+</sub>D<sub>2</sub> 725AB<sub>2</sub>C<sub>2</sub> 728B<sub>+</sub>C<sub>+</sub> 729B<sub>2</sub>C 732A<sub>+</sub>D 733AB<sub>+</sub> 817C 821A<sub>2</sub>C 856D<sub>+</sub> 857A<sub>+</sub> 865C 869C<sub>2</sub> 892C 896AB 897A 913A 937C 949C 956B 981A; MT.1033A  
 non-being (ἀνούσιος, non/sine substantia): DN.697A 716D 732D 817B; MT.1040D  
 non-intellect (ἄνους, non-intellectus): DN.697A 725B 732D 868A 869A; MT.1040D  
 non-wandering, (ly) (ἀνεκφοίτητος, -ως, ingressibilis, (iter)): DN.640D 649B 652A 704D 712B 912D 977C; MT.1033A  
 nothing (οὐδέν, nihil): DN.588C<sub>2</sub> 593C<sub>2</sub> 596C 636C 637C 640C 641AC 644A<sub>+</sub>C 645A<sub>2</sub> 649BC 652A 680D 684C 697D 820B 821B 824B 856A 868D 872A<sub>+</sub>D 892D 893AC 913C 952D 977C 980AB 981A 984A<sub>2</sub>; MT.1000AB 1001A 1040C 1045D; EP3.1069B; EP4.1072B  
 number (ἀριθμός, numerus): DN.697C 700A 708C 820D<sub>+</sub> 865B 909C 937C<sub>2</sub> 977C 980A<sub>2</sub>CD<sub>+</sub> 981A; MT.1054D  
 one (εἷς, unus): DN.588B 592A 593B 596A 597A 637AB 641AB<sub>+</sub> 644AB 649B<sub>+</sub>C<sub>+</sub>D 652A<sub>2</sub> 681B 701B<sub>2</sub>C 704B 705C 709C 713BCD<sub>2</sub> 717A<sub>2</sub> 721D 724A<sub>2</sub> 729C 732B 816D 817AB 821A<sub>2</sub>B 824B<sub>2</sub>C<sub>+</sub> 825A<sub>+</sub>B<sub>2</sub> 868BC 869B<sub>+</sub> 872B 873A 912CD 937A 949A<sub>2</sub>CD<sub>2</sub> 952A<sub>2</sub>B 956A 969C 972A 977AB<sub>2</sub>C<sub>+</sub> 980A<sub>+</sub>B<sub>+</sub>C<sub>+</sub>D<sub>+</sub>; MT.1048A  
 order (τάξις, ordo): DN.589A 592A 648C<sub>2</sub> 696AB 697BC 705C 713C 720AC<sub>2</sub> 724D 728CD 821B 872AB 892CD 896ABD 949D 969B 980D; MT.1045D  
 order, (v) (τάττω, ordinare): DN.697B 709C<sub>2</sub> 820B<sub>2</sub> 869A 896A 897B  
 otherness (ἑτερότης, alteritas): DN.589D 704B 912D 913AB 952B<sub>2</sub>D  
 outside (ἐξω, extra): DN.705A 708C 712A 717A  
 part (μέρος, pars): DN.637A 641AC 644A<sub>2</sub> 648C<sub>+</sub> 649C<sub>+</sub> 684AC 705C<sub>2</sub> 708D 716D 821B 913A<sub>2</sub> 956B 980AC; MT.1033B  
 participate, (v) (μετέχω, participare): DN.592C 641C 644A<sub>+</sub>B<sub>2</sub> 649C 693B 696C 697CD 701C<sub>2</sub> 704B<sub>2</sub> 717C 720A<sub>+</sub>BC<sub>2</sub>D<sub>2</sub> 721A 817B<sub>+</sub> 820A<sub>+</sub>B<sub>2</sub>C<sub>+</sub> 824C<sub>2</sub> 825A<sub>2</sub> 856AB 909C 913D 937D 940A 956A<sub>2</sub>B 972AB<sub>2</sub> 977C 980AC; EP2.1069A  
 participated in, what is (μετεχομένον, participatum): DN.644A 820C 909C 956B  
 participation (μίθεξις, participatio): DN.641C 700B 720A 721A 724AB  
 participation (μετουσία, participatio): DN.649B 696C 697D 720A 721A 729A 949B

participation (μέτεχον, participationum): DN.641C 644A<sub>2</sub>B<sub>2</sub> 701C 717C 817B<sub>+</sub> 820ABC<sub>2</sub> 824C 856A 913D 956A<sub>2</sub> 972B<sub>2</sub>; EP2.1069B  
 partlessness (ἀμέρεια, impartibilitas): DN.868B 913A 980B  
 peace (εἰρήνη, pax): DN.948CD 949A<sub>+</sub> 952A<sub>2</sub>B<sub>2</sub>C<sub>+</sub>D<sub>2</sub> 953A<sub>+</sub>C; EP5.-1076A  
 posit (v) (τιθῆμι, ponere): DN.732C 953C; MT.1000AB 1025B 1033C<sub>+</sub> 1048B. This term is also translated as "to position" or "to affirm."  
 position (θέσις, positio): DN.641A<sub>2</sub> 893A; MT.1000B<sub>2</sub> 1025B 1033C 1048AB<sub>2</sub>  
 power (δύναμις, virtus): DN.585B 588A 589D 592D 593ABC 596B 597AB 640AD 645AC<sub>2</sub> 649C 680AD 681BC 693B 696B<sub>2</sub>C 700C 701AB 705A<sub>2</sub>C 708BD 708C<sub>2</sub> 712ABC 713ABCD 717C 720A<sub>2</sub>C 724C 725ABC 728B 729C<sub>+</sub> 732B 733AC 736B 817C 821B<sub>2</sub>C 865C 868B<sub>2</sub>C 872A 889BC<sub>+</sub>D<sub>+</sub> 892A<sub>+</sub>B<sub>+</sub>C<sub>2</sub>D 893A<sub>+</sub>CD 896B 912D 913ABC<sub>2</sub> 917A 949A 952AC 953AC 956A 980AC 981D; MT.1033A 1048A<sub>2</sub>; EP4.1072B<sub>2</sub>  
 preeminence (ὑπεροχή, excessus, excellentia): DN.645B 697C 705C 869A<sub>2</sub> 872A 909C 952A 969B 972A 977C; MT.1040C 1045D 1048B  
 presence (παρουσία, praesentia): DN.701B 720C 952A; MT.1001A  
 present, (v) (πάρεμι, adesse): DN.597B 680B<sub>+</sub>CD 681AD 717D 720A<sub>2</sub> 820A 865C 912BD 916C  
 preserve, (v) (σώζω, salvare): DN.716C 725B<sub>2</sub> 820A 897B  
 privation (στέρησις, privatio): DN.720A 721A 725C 728C<sub>2</sub> 729C<sub>+</sub> 732D 736B 865B 893C 897B<sub>2</sub>; MT.1000B 1040D; EP1.1065A  
 procession (προόδος, processio): DN.589D 640D 641D 649B<sub>2</sub> 652A 680B 712C 816B<sub>2</sub>D 825A 892D 913B<sub>2</sub> 916C<sub>2</sub>D 949A 980A  
 produce, (v) (ποιέω, facere, producere): DN.597C 644B 700B 701B 708A<sub>+</sub> 716C 717BC 721C 725C 729AB 732B<sub>2</sub> 736A 824B 892D<sub>2</sub> 896C 952A 953A; MT.1025B<sub>2</sub> 1048B  
 providence (πρόνοια, providentia): DN.593D 596D 597A<sub>2</sub> 680B 696B 704BD 709D 712AB 713B 716B 733AB<sub>+</sub> 736B 816C<sub>2</sub> 817A 952C 953A 956B 969C<sub>2</sub> 972A  
 pure, (ly) (ἀμυγής, -ῶς, immixtus, (e)): DN.641BC<sub>2</sub>D 649D 717C 724B 733B 868B 896A 912B 937A 949C 952AC 969C  
 ray (ἄκτις, radius): DN.588AC 589A 592CD 680C<sub>2</sub> 693B 697BD<sub>2</sub> 701AC 708D 872B; MT.1000AD  
 redemption (ἀπολύτρωσις, liberatio): DN.596B 889BC 897A  
 rest (στάσις, status): DN.593C 704C<sub>+</sub> 705BC<sub>2</sub> 821B 896C 909AB 916B<sub>+</sub>D  
 reversion (ἐπιστροφή, conversio): DN.704B 709D 712A 713B 916D  
 revert, (v) (επιστρέφω, convertere): DN.700AB<sub>2</sub> 701B 705AD 708B 712C 720C 856CD 912D 913C<sub>2</sub> 937A 948D 980C<sub>2</sub>  
 sacred, (ly) (ιερός, -ῶς, sacrus, (e)): DN.588ACD 589AB<sub>+</sub>CD<sub>2</sub> 592AB 597-AB<sub>2</sub>C 636C 637A 640D 645AB 648A 649D 681C 684B 696C 700D 701C 708A 709C 713A 724AC 736B 857A 872CD 897A 913A 937B 949A 953B<sub>2</sub> 984A  
 salvation (σωτηρία, salvatio): DN.596B 889BC 869D<sub>2</sub> 897A<sub>+</sub> 912D

sensation (αἴσθησις, sensus): DN.593A 700B 705D 708D<sub>2</sub> 709A<sub>2</sub> 816C 817B 821B 857A 865C 868BC<sub>2</sub>D<sub>2</sub> 869C 872A 892A; MT.997B

sensible, (ly) (αἰσθητός, -ῶς, sensibilis, (iter)): DN.588B 592B 641A 700AB 705B 708D<sub>2</sub> 709A 824B 868D 869C<sub>2</sub> 913B; MT.997B 1033A 1040C<sub>2</sub>D<sub>+</sub>; EP5.1073A

separate, (v) (ἐξαίρῶ, segregare): DN.588C 592D 593AC 597C 645BC<sub>+</sub> 648C 649B 712BC 720B 721B 825AB 869A 889C<sub>2</sub> 972A 981AB; MT.-1025B

simplicity (ἀπλότης, simplicitas): DN.589CD 592B 825A 872C 972B

son (ἱῖος, filius): DN.592C<sub>2</sub> 637AB 640C 641D<sub>2</sub> 645C<sub>2</sub>

soul (ψυχή, anima): DN.596B 641C 681B 696C<sub>+</sub>D 700D 704C 705A<sub>2</sub>C 708CD<sub>2</sub> 717A 725D 728AD<sub>2</sub> 729B<sub>2</sub> 732A<sub>2</sub> 733A 821BCD 856BD 857A 868BC 893A 912A 913A<sub>2</sub> 949D 981B; MT.1045D

source (ἀρχή, principium): DN.589B<sub>2</sub>C<sub>+</sub> 596C 645AC 648C<sub>2</sub> 697B 700A 704A 705D<sub>2</sub> 708A 716AC 717A 721C<sub>+</sub>D<sub>2</sub> 725A 729A 732BCD 736B 817C 820AB<sub>+</sub>C<sub>2</sub> 821AB<sub>2</sub> 824A<sub>2</sub>B<sub>2</sub> 825B<sub>2</sub> 856B 857B 868C 869A 872B 937B<sub>2</sub> 949A 953D 956A 980AD; EP2.1069A<sub>2</sub>. This term is also translated as "principle."

spiral, (ly) (ἐλικοειδής, -ῶς, obliquus, (e)): DN.704D 705A 916D

spirit (πνεῦμα, spiritus): DN.596C 637A<sub>+</sub>B<sub>2</sub>C 640C 644C 645BC 912A 980B; MT.1033A 1048A

straight (εὐθύς, linea): DN.644A 704D<sub>2</sub> 705B 821A 916C<sub>2</sub> 953C

sun (ἥλιος, sol): DN.596C 684B 693B<sub>2</sub> 697C 700BC 824BC<sub>2</sub> 865B

supercosmic, (ly) (ὑπερκοσμίος, -ῶς, supermundus, (e)): DN.589BD 596C 641C 693C 696AB 701A 713B 821BD

support (ὑποστάτης, substantificator): DN.909B 913D 917A 953BC 956A<sub>2</sub>

supreme foundation (ὑπεριδρύσις, supercollectio): DN.640D

thearchic, (ly) (θεαρκικός, -ῶς, thearchicus, (e)): DN.588A<sub>2</sub> 589AB<sub>2</sub> 593C 636C 637AB<sub>2</sub>C 641D 645C 652A<sub>2</sub> 681D 693B 816B

theological (θεολογικός, theologicus): DN.585B 589D 593B 636C 640ABD 645A 648AB<sub>2</sub> 680A 681A<sub>2</sub> 684B 816B 893B 953B; MT.1032D 1033AB

theologian (θεολόγος, theologans): DN.585B 588C 589D 596A 597A 648A 681D<sub>2</sub> 693B 701C 709BC 712C 724A 865B 889C 893BC 897B 913C 916C 981AC<sub>2</sub>

theology (θεολογία, theologia): DN.588A 597B<sub>2</sub> 636BC 637B 640A 641D 648A 680D 681A<sub>+</sub> 700C 709A 824CD 889C 897A 913B 916A 937D 977B 980B 984A; MT.997A 1000B 1032CD 1033A<sub>2</sub>B; EP3.1069B

thrust-beyond (ὑπερβολή, excessus): DN.697A 708AB<sub>2</sub> 712A 825A 949B 972A; EP5.1073A

time (χρόνος, tempus): DN.684B 697B<sub>2</sub> 700A 724A 728B 817C<sub>+</sub> 820A<sub>2</sub> 825B<sub>2</sub> 892D 936C 937B<sub>+</sub>C<sub>+</sub>D<sub>+</sub> 940A<sub>+</sub>; MT.1048A

touch (ἐπαφή, tactus): DN.593B 644B 705D 872A; MT.1040D 1048A

trinity (τριάς, trinitas): DN.592A 641A 680B 700A 821C 980D<sub>2</sub> 981A; MT. 997A. This term is also translated as "three."

true, (ly) (αληθής, -ῶς, verus, (e)): DN.588A 593C 596C 637A 640A 644C 645A 648D 680C 701B 708A 709C 712A 717B 720A 729B 736B 817B

- 869C 872D<sub>2</sub> 873A 896BC 953D 969B 981AC; MT.1000C; EP4.1072-A<sub>2</sub>BC; EP5.1073A
- truth (αληθεία, veritas): DN.585B 588B 592AC<sub>2</sub> 593C<sub>2</sub> 596A 597C 637A 640A<sub>2</sub> 684B 712A 716B 721C 736B 856D 865AC 868B 872C.D. 873A<sub>2</sub> 893B<sub>+</sub> 981AD; MT.1033A 1048A<sub>2</sub>
- uncaused (αναίτιος, sine causa): DN.732AD 736B. This term is also translated as "without cause."
- understand, (v) (νοέω, intelligere): DN.645A 684B 693C<sub>2</sub> 700C 708C 725BC 733D 817B 824A 865CD 868BC 869A 872A 913A 916C<sub>2</sub> 949C; MT.1000D 1033D 1045D; EP2.1068A; EP3.1069B. This term is also translated as "to think."
- unify (ένώω, unire): DN.592C 593B 636B 640AB 641AB 644A<sub>2</sub>CD 649ABC 652A<sub>2</sub> 680D 704ABD 705A<sub>2</sub>B 820B<sub>2</sub>D 821A<sub>+</sub> 824B 872BD 892C 949-A<sub>+</sub>C<sub>+</sub>D 952AB 980AB<sub>2</sub>; MT.1001A 1025A 1033C
- unity (ένάς, unitas): DN.588B<sub>2</sub> 589D 593D 637A 892D
- unity (ένωσις, unitas): DN.588A 589D 592C 593BC<sub>+</sub> 636B 640D<sub>2</sub> 641-A<sub>+</sub>BC<sub>+</sub>D<sub>+</sub> 644AD 648B 652A 680B 696A 704B 705CD 708D 712C 720B 816B 821AB<sub>2</sub> 824C 825A 865C 872B 916A 949AB<sub>2</sub>C<sub>2</sub>D 952A<sub>2</sub>D; MT.997B
- unknowing (άγνωσία, ignorantia): DN.588A 641A 872A<sub>2</sub> 913B; MT.1001A 1025AB; EP1.1065A<sub>+</sub>
- unknown (άγνωστος, -ως, ignotus, (e)): DN.585B<sub>2</sub> 592C 593B<sub>2</sub> 648A 708CD 816B 869C 892A 949BC; MT.997B 1001A; EP3.1069B. The adverbial form of this term is "unknowingly."
- unlimitedness (άπερία, infinitas): DN.588C 593C 680B 705C 825AB<sub>2</sub> 909C 977B 980C
- unmoved (άκίνητος, immobiles): DN.680D 732B 872D 909B 916B<sub>2</sub>C<sub>2</sub> 937B 952CD
- unparticipated (άμέθεκτος, imparticipatus): DN.644AC 912A 956AB 972B
- weakness (άσθενία, infirmitas): DN.681D 724D 725B 723B<sub>2</sub>D 728ABD 733C<sub>2</sub> 736A<sub>+</sub> 856B 892A
- what is caused (αίτιατός, causata): DN.593D 596A 645C<sub>+</sub>D 913D 916A
- whole (όλος, totus): DN.589A 592D 593D 596C 597C 636C<sub>+</sub> 637A<sub>2</sub>B<sub>+</sub>C<sub>2</sub> 640ABC 641A<sub>+</sub>B<sub>2</sub>C<sub>+</sub> 644A<sub>+</sub>B<sub>+</sub>C 648C<sub>+</sub> 649B<sub>+</sub>C<sub>2</sub> 652A<sub>2</sub> 680B<sub>2</sub> 681CD<sub>2</sub> 693B 696B 697B 700BC 701AC<sub>2</sub>D 704A<sub>2</sub> 712BC 716A<sub>2</sub>BC<sub>2</sub>D 717B 720AC 721A<sub>+</sub> 724B 725BC<sub>2</sub> 728C 729BC 732AD 733AB<sub>2</sub>C 736A 816BD 817CD 821A<sub>2</sub>B 824C 825B 856D 865D<sub>2</sub> 868A<sub>2</sub> 872C 889D 892C 893A<sub>2</sub> 896AD<sub>+</sub> 897A<sub>2</sub>C<sub>+</sub> 912C 913BC 916C 936D<sub>2</sub> 937C 948D 949A<sub>+</sub>BC 952B<sub>+</sub>C 953C 956A<sub>2</sub>B<sub>2</sub> 977B<sub>2</sub> 980A<sub>+</sub>B<sub>2</sub>C<sub>+</sub> 981B; MT.1033C<sub>+</sub> 1048B; EP4.1072A
- without beginning (άναρχος, sine principium): DN.704D 705A 712D
- wisdom (σοφία, sapientia): DN.585B 596B 697A 709BC 816BC<sub>+</sub> 817A 821B 865AB<sub>+</sub> 868A<sub>2</sub>BC<sub>+</sub> 968B 872BC 889C; MT.1033A 1048A
- without intellection (άνοήτος, -ως, non-intelligibilis): DN.588B 708C. The adverbial form of this word is translated as "unintelligibility."

without logos (ἀλόγος, sine ratione): DN.696C 708B 720B 725B 732D  
868A 869A; MT.1000C 1040D. This term is sometimes translated as  
"irrational."

writing (λόγιον, eloquium): DN.585B 588A<sub>2</sub>C<sub>2</sub> 589B<sub>2</sub>D 592B<sub>+</sub>C 596C  
597B 636C<sub>2</sub> 637BC<sub>2</sub> 640A<sub>+</sub>B<sub>2</sub>D 644D 645AB 648A 652A 681BC<sub>2</sub> 697B  
700A 708B 709AB<sub>2</sub> 721C 725A 733D 736AB 816C 821D 824A 856B  
865B 868D 869AC 872BC<sub>2</sub> 889C 909B<sub>+</sub> 917A 937D 940A 953B 969B  
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- connection (συνοχή, continentia): DN.596D 696A 700A 704C 705D 712A 937A 949C
- constitute, (v) (ὑπαρχώ, subsistere): DN.733B 817D<sub>2</sub> 821C 916B 940A
- constitution (ὑπαρξις, essentia): DN.593D 636C 640C 641AD 693B<sub>2</sub> 704B 724A 817C. This term is also translated as "source" and "ground."
- contemplation (θεωρία, contemplatio): DN.588CD 592C 597B 681A 684C 705B
- contemplate, (v) (θεωρέω, contemplari): DN.592D 684C 821B 857B 909B 949C; MT.1000D
- dark (σκοπός, tenebra): DN.585A 649A 708C 713B 716C 732C 816B 868C 893B 897A
- demonstrate (ἀποδείκνυμι, demonstrare): DN.593B 636C 637C 640B 712B 736B
- denial (ἀπόφασις, negatio): DN.981B; MT.1000B; EP4.1072B
- denial (ἀφαίρεσις, ablatio): DN.593C 640B 641A<sub>2</sub> 697A 704B 872A; MT.-1000B 1025AB<sub>2</sub> 1033C<sub>2</sub> 1048B<sub>+</sub>
- deny, (v) (ἀποφαίνω, negare): DN.588B 952B
- desire, (v) (ἐφίημι, desiderare): DN.593D 684C 693B 696A 697A 700AB<sub>2</sub>C 701A 704B 708A 712B 713D 716ABC 720C<sub>+</sub> 725C<sub>+</sub> 733CD<sub>+</sub> 817B 868C 892C<sub>+</sub> 896C 948D 952B 953A
- difference (διάκρισις, discretio): DN.636B 640D<sub>2</sub> 641A<sub>2</sub>B<sub>2</sub>D<sub>+</sub> 644AD 649-AB<sub>2</sub>C 652A<sub>+</sub> 696A 704B 705C 821B 952B<sub>2</sub>
- differentiate, (v) (διακρίνω, discernere): DN.636B 640AC<sub>2</sub> 641B<sub>2</sub> 644C<sub>2</sub>D 649B 681B 684D 821A<sub>2</sub> 824B 892CD
- dissimilar, (ly) (ἀνόμοιος, -ῶς, dissimilis, (iter)): DN.644B 732BD 909AB 916A<sub>2</sub>
- divine, (ly) (θεῖος, -ῶς, divinus, (e)): DN.585AB 588A<sub>2</sub> 589D 592C<sub>+</sub> 593B 597ABC 636B 637C 640A<sub>2</sub>D<sub>2</sub> 641AD 644A<sub>2</sub>CD 645A<sub>2</sub>C<sub>2</sub> 648B<sub>2</sub> 649B<sub>2</sub>D<sub>2</sub> 652A 680BCD 681A<sub>2</sub>B<sub>2</sub>C 684A<sub>2</sub>B<sub>+</sub>C<sub>+</sub> 696AB 697C 700AD 705B 708BC 709AB<sub>+</sub>C<sub>+</sub> 712A<sub>2</sub>BD 713AC 720A 724AB<sub>2</sub> 725A 733B 736B 817B 820A 824C 856BD<sub>2</sub> 857A<sub>+</sub> 865B<sub>2</sub>C<sub>+</sub>D 868ABCD 869ABD 872AC 873A 889BC 893AB 896ABCD 909B 913ABC 916AB 937AB<sub>2</sub> 948D 949A<sub>2</sub>CD 952AC 953C 956A 972B 981B; MT.997A 1000A<sub>2</sub>BC<sub>2</sub>D<sub>2</sub> 1033A<sub>+</sub>B<sub>+</sub>C<sub>2</sub>; EP3.1069B EP4.1072BC; EP5.1073A<sub>2</sub>
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- echo (ἀπήχημα, resonantia): DN.697C 720AC 856B 868C 892A
- end (τέλος, finis): DN.697C 700A 716C 732BD 824B 825B 872BC 973B 969B
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